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## I.—ON THE ORIGIN OF “*HAD RATHER GO*” AND ANALOGOUS OR APPARENTLY ANALOGOUS LOCUTIONS.

Of the verb *have*, Dr. Johnson, in his *Dictionary*, gives, as the seventeenth definition, “to wish, to desire, in a lax sense,”<sup>1</sup> and adds, by way of exemplification, the familiar Biblical passage: “I *had*, rather be a doorkeeper,” etc.<sup>2</sup>

A still more disparaging opinion, perhaps a maturer, he records under the adverb *rather*, where, as introductory to a sentence containing the phrase “he *had rather* mankind should adore him,” after premising “to *have rather*,” defined by “to desire in preference,” he remarks: “This is, I think, a barbarous expression, of late intrusion into our language,<sup>3</sup> for which it is better to say *will*

<sup>1</sup> That *have*, when it bears this signification, comes “from the Lat. *aveo*,” is the remarkable information appended to these words by one of Dr. Johnson’s editors, Archdeacon Todd.

Dr. Latham cuts down the Archdeacon’s definition and etymology to “wish, desire,” and retains the Psalmic exemplification, which must mean, for anything that appears to the contrary, “I *wished* rather to be,” etc.!

<sup>2</sup> *Psalm* lxxxiv, 10. Compare “I *had* rather speak,” etc., 1 *Corinthians*, xiv, 10. The Victorian revisionists are content with “*had*” there.

<sup>3</sup> This, in the estimation of Horne Tooke, is said “most ignorantly”; a denunciation for reasons which are left unexpressed, and which it is difficult to conjecture. For Tooke does not offer to show that the expression commented on is not barbarous, or that it is of long standing; nor does he propose any analysis or vindication of it whatever.

*rather*.”<sup>4</sup> Of *to have rather*, in the sense of it which he contemplates,<sup>5</sup> or of *has rather*, cognate to it, he neglects to adduce an instance, though, of course, he should have adduced one.<sup>6</sup>

However, what Dr. Johnson was pleased to “think” on any point of English of which the just ruling demands a somewhat industrious inspection of our older authors, is hardly of noticeable import. “I have fixed Sidney’s work for the boundary beyond which I make few excursions,” he informs us.<sup>7</sup> How, then, was he to know, unless by good hap, or at second hand, that *had rather*, used as in the Bible,<sup>8</sup> had, at the time he conceived it to be “of

<sup>4</sup> How, one wonders, would Dr. Johnson have proposed to deal with the old “I *have liefer go*” and “I *have as lief go*,” if he had known the expressions? Would he have struck out their *have*?

<sup>5</sup> *To have rather*, meaning, according to Dr. Johnson’s notion, as above, has been found. This will be seen by and by.

It is worth noting that *rather*, for “somewhat,” though not recognized by Dr. Johnson,—I remember his quotation from Dryden,—was in vogue in his day, and was not unknown, many generations earlier, in a sense which, also, he overpasses.

“I praid for it as a straunger schulde doo, alle be it myn autorite is as grete as theris, and *rather* more, as I tolde you.” William Worcester (1460), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. I, p. 508. It is, in all other cases, as here, Mr. James Gairdner’s admirable edition of the *Paston Letters*, published in 1872–1875, that I refer to.

“They be delyveryd hym in as good, and *rather* better, plyght than whan I had them forth,” etc. Sir John Paston (1474), *ibid.*, vol. III, p. 115. Four pages on, the same writer again has “*rather* better.”

In these passages, *rather* signifies “not only so, but.”

“After dinner, with my wife to the Duke’s Theatre, and saw the second part of ‘Rhodes,’ done with the new Roxalana, which do [Pepysian for ‘does’] it *rather* better, in all respects, for person, voice, and judgment, than the first Roxalana.” Samuel Pepys (1662), *Diary*, etc. (ed. 1876), vol. II, p. 109. “*Rather* harder,” etc. *Id.*, *ibid.*, vol. III, p. 254 (1665); vol. V, p. 174 (1668).

See also Aubrey (1680), in Bliss’s *Letters*, etc. (1813), vol. II, p. 394. But *rather*, as in question, did not become common till the age of Swift and Pope.

Dr. Johnson himself, as a few minutes’ search revealed to me, has *rather*, “somewhat,” repeatedly, as in the *Idler*, No. 29.

<sup>6</sup> A comment in which Dr. Johnson treats *had rather* as analogous to *had better* will be cited in due course.

<sup>7</sup> As he was of opinion that our language, in the days of Sir Thomas More, was “in a great degree formed and settled,” his ignoring it so largely as he did, and especially as found in the pages of Tyndale, can ill be reconciled with consistency.

<sup>8</sup> As has been pointed out, Dr. Johnson writes, in *Rasselas*: “I *had rather* hear thee dispute.” Landor, *Life and Works* (1876), vol. IV, p. 210.

late intrusion into our language," been in existence some three centuries," and, most likely, for a still longer period?

Miss Harriet Martineau is alleged to have written: "I knew a gentleman in America, who told me how much *rather* he *had be* a woman than the man he is."<sup>10</sup> And this "*rather* he *had be*," many would contend, is no more incorrect than "he *had rather be*." For, according to the current view regarding the latter phrase, its *had* is an auxiliary verb, and so cannot be coupled with an infinitive. Thus argued Thomas Sheridan,<sup>11</sup> in 1784: "'I *had rather*.' This phrase is strangely ungrammatical. *Rather* means 'more willingly.' Now, let us substitute the one in the place of the other,—as, 'I *had more willingly go* than stay,'—and its impropriety would be manifest. The adverb *rather* is expressive of an act of the will, and, therefore, should be joined to the verb *to will*, and not to the auxiliary, *to have*. Instead of 'I *had rather*,' it should be 'I *would rather*.'" Sheridan's pretence of assigning a reason need not detain me.

Bishop Lowth remarks, in his *Short Introduction to English Grammar*:<sup>12</sup> "It has been very rightly observed, that the verb *had*, in the common phrase 'I *had rather*,' is not properly used either as an active or as an auxiliary verb; that, being in the past time, it cannot, in this case, be properly expressive of time present; and that it is by no means reducible to any grammatical construction. In truth, it seems to have arisen from a mere mistake, in resolving the familiar and ambiguous abbreviation 'I'd *rather*' into 'I *had rather*,' instead of 'I *would rather*,' which latter is the regular, analogous [*read* analogical], and proper expression."

Later grammarians and lexicographers, in general, accept this solution; and the editors of *Webster's Dictionary* go so far as confidently to pronounce *had rather*, *had as lief*, and *had better* to

Landor fables Dr. Johnson to have replied, on hearing this passage repeated: "I hope you do not very often find such inaccuracies in my writings. Can you point out another?"

The following passage must have escaped Landor: "I am convinced that our ministers . . . *had rather hear* that a thousand merchants," etc. Dr. Johnson, *Debates in Parliament* (ed. 1787), vol. II, p. 12.

<sup>9</sup> Ample proof of what is implied is furnished in the course of this paper.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted by Mr. Goold Brown, in his *Grammar of English Grammars* (ed. 1873), p. 365.

<sup>11</sup> In his edition of Swift's *Works*, vol. II, Preface.

<sup>12</sup> Edition of 1769, p. 79, note 5.

have been, "originally, mere blundering interpretations of the abbreviated form of *would*, as in 'I'd rather,' etc."<sup>13</sup>

Archdeacon Hare, though of opinion that, "according to the principles of our language as now established, the expression 'I *had rather do*' involves so gross an anomaly, that it would be better to get rid of it,"<sup>14</sup> says, and rightly, with reference to the notion which the editors just quoted are so easily satisfied with: "Plausible, however, as this explanation is, a little search in our ancient writers proves it to be unfounded."<sup>15</sup>

Let us now listen to Dr. Alexander Crombie. "All words and phrases," he writes, "which, analysed grammatically, include a solecism, should be dismissed; as, 'I *had rather go*.' The expression should be 'I *would* or 'I'd *rather go*.' . . . I must observe, also, that the phraseology . . . occurs in some of our earliest writers, and is so frequently found in Pope and Swift, that one is tempted to infer, notwithstanding its solecistic appearance, that it is

<sup>13</sup> This is given under the word *rather*. Like Dr. Johnson, the editors above quoted wax in assurance as they advance in the alphabet. For, under *have*, they write: "*Had rather, had as lief, had better*, are, probably, formed by corruption, for *would rather*, etc., when contracted; as, 'I'd *rather*.'" And compare what they say under *lief*.

<sup>14</sup> *Fragments of Two Essays in English Philology* (1873), Part II, p. 71.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* Part II, p. 68. Archdeacon Hare evidently suspected an ellipsis of *to*, before the verb, in "I *had rather do*," but, strangely enough, was unable to produce any old passage in substantiation of his surmise. And there he stopped. To ponder *had* and *rather*, in "I *had rather do*," does not seem to have occurred to him.

Landon, who entertained a particular dislike to *had rather* and *had better*, speaks of one or other of them no fewer than five times. See his *Life and Works* (1876), vol. IV, pp. 62, 170, 184, 210, 249. He is positive that *had* there originated from an ignorant expansion of *I'd* or *I'ou'd*, contracted from *I would*. Nor is he satisfied with thus much of common-place. After the fashion of many others, he strikes out the middle word from *had rather be*, and asks: "Cannot our writers perceive that *had be* is not English?" Archdeacon Hare has since likewise written: "Leave out the adverb, and no one would take 'I *had do*,' 'you *had go*,' to be English; and the go-between can hardly be said to legalize the union" seen in "'I *had rather do*,' 'you *had better go*.'" *Fragments*, etc. (*ut supra*), Part II, p. 68.

In his fastidiousness, Landon prefers, to the usual phraseology: "You *would better let* that chap alone." Vol. VI, p. 124. Worse still, he has: "Those who removed it, in this instance, were little aware that they *had better left* it." Vol. IV, p. 229. On the same model would be "He *had better gone* home." Why, since he shrank from *had better have left*, did not Landon put *would better have left*, instead of trespassing into the diction of poetry?

genuine English. It is difficult, however, nay, perhaps impossible, to reconcile it to analogy. Were I to offer conjecture on the subject, I should be inclined to say, that, in such phrases as 'I *had go*,' 'I *had*' is, by a grammatical figure very common in English, put for 'I *would have*' or 'I *would possess*,' and that the simple name of the act or state, by an ellipsis perhaps of the verbal sign, is subjoined, as the object wished, no regard being had to the completion of the action; in the same manner as we say 'I *would have gone*,' when we wish the action perfected."<sup>16</sup>

That Dr. Crombie credits "some of our earliest writers" with "I *had rather go*," evinces how little he was conversant with them.<sup>17</sup> How, too, can he be "tempted to infer that it is genuine English," seeing that he expressly classes it among phrases which "include a solecism"? By "solecism," it should be noted, he understands "construction contrary to the English idiom"; and, in the page next after that where this definition occurs, it is laid down that a solecism is "an offence against the rules of syntax," strangely exemplified by the word *peoples*, and by *attendance* in the sense of "attention." But this only in passing.

Our ancestors must have been, forsooth, a most peculiar people, if, agreeably to Dr. Crombie's extraordinary theory, they chose to frame, in their minds, so mysterious an idea, to denote a conditional wish to go, as that expressed by "I *would possess going*"; modified it, in speech, into "I *had go*"; and then slipped in *rather*, to the generation of "I *had rather go*."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *A Treatise on the Etymology and Syntax of the English Language* (ed. 1809), pp. 328-330.

<sup>17</sup> The Rev. Dr. E. A. Abbott says, in his *Shakespearian Grammar* (ed. 1871), p. 152: "In Chaucer and earlier writers, preference is expressed both by our modern 'I *had*, or *would*, *rather* (*i. e.*, sooner),' " etc. Not to be misunderstood, this needs qualifying. Chaucer may, possibly, have written "I *would rather go*" and "I *had rather gone* "; but he surely cannot be quoted for "our modern" "I *had rather go*," or the like.

<sup>18</sup> The Rev. Dr. Philip Withers defended *had rather*, as in "I *had rather go*," after a fashion of his own. Supposing an ellipsis, after it, of *to*, he maintains that its *had*, which he still holds to be an auxiliary verb, is "legitimately construed [*sic*] with an infinitive active." In the course of his tedious folly, he writes:

"Luther *had to oppose* prejudices, *rather* than to confute arguments.'

"Luther *had rather to oppose* prejudices, than to confute arguments.'

"I *had rather oppose* prejudices, than to contend against facts.'

"The first and second instances refer to a specified time. The last instance is the past indefinite." *Aristarchus* (1791), p. 197 (ed. 1822).

Besides *rather*, we find, without necessarily recurring to antiquated literature, *better, best, need, as good, as lief*,<sup>19</sup> *liefer*, and so on, in constructions popularly supposed to be, one and all, parallel to that of the passage from the *Psalms*, adverted to in my opening paragraph.

From the Anglo-Saxon adjective *leōf* we formerly had *lef*,-<sup>20</sup> "beloved," "dear," "precious," "acceptable," "wished for,"

His third sentence, not to speak of its omission of *to*, drops the idea of obligation implied by the unauxiliary *had* of the two first sentences, and retains from them only the idea of preference. The distinction of tenses which he points to is nothing to his immediate purpose. Though not himself obtuse, he must have expected his readers to be so, if to be imposed on by such transparent sophistry.

<sup>19</sup> Old spellings of our present *lief* are *leof, lef, lefe, leff, leffe, leef, leefe, leeff, leeffe, leyf, leyff, leyfe, leif, leife, leiffe, lyf, lyff, lyef, lyefe, liefe, life, liffe, leaf, leove, leve, leewe, leive, leave, lieve, lyve, live, luef, lefte* (for rime). Add *liefs, lieves*, and *lives*, American, for the most part; with *looze* and *luze*, which I have heard in East Anglia.

Among the predecessors of *liefer* which occur are, in addition to *lever*, which is much the commonest, *leovere, levere, leveer, levre, levyr, lewyr, lewir, leiver, leaver, liever, lyver, luere, lefir, leefir, leferre, leifer, leiffer, leyffer, lieffer*.

The superlative was written *leovest, levest, leveste, leofest, leofeste, liefest*.

Of course there are more varieties; but these are all that I find in the thousand and more extracts which I have made for *lief* and its conjugates.

The special Scotch forms I have made no attempt to collect.

<sup>20</sup> This is very common in old authors, qualifying *lord, master, sir, lemmán, dame, child, fere, life*, and so forth. Till past the middle of the sixteenth century, it was frequently coupled with *dear*, as in Mr. Tennyson's attempted revival of the term. See the anonymous *Kyng Alisaunder* (about 1300?), ll. 776, 2496: Robert Mannyng (1327-1338), in Hearne's *Peter Langtoft's Chronicle* (ed. 1810), pp. 44, 197: *Chester Plays* (about 1328?), vol. I, pp. 28, 77, 169, 196; vol. II, pp. 116, 128: Richard Rolle de Hampole, *Pricke of Conscience* (ab. 1340), l. 2978: Chaucer, *Poetical Works* (Mr. Bell's ed., which I uniformly refer to), vol. I, p. 204; *id.*, *Boethius*, p. 37: Gower, *Confessio Amantis* (ed. Dr. Pauli, which I always quote), vol. III, p. 108: Hoccleve (1406?), *Poems* (ed. 1796), p. 47: *Townley Mysteries* (*temp.* Hen. VI?), pp. 123, 323.

The work last named also has, at p. 236: "And ther is nothing me so *lefe* As murder a mycher and hang a thefe."

"In to *lef* reste his sowle wond." *Story of Genesis and Exodus* (about 1250), l. 4136. In l. 340, "*lef* or loth" means "pleasing or displeasing"; as also in Gower, *Conf. Amant.*, vol. I, p. 268, etc., etc.

"And that is to me bothe gladde and *lefe*." Syr Tryamour (*temp.* Ed. II?) in Utterson's *Select Pieces of Early Popular Poetry*, vol. I, p. 10.

In the *Ludus Coventriae* (15th cent.?), p. 396, we read: "To hurle wyth the harlotys me is ful *lef*."

"agreeable," "pleasant," and so forth,—with its comparative and superlative, *lever* and *levest*.<sup>21</sup> Soon after the beginning of the

*Lief* was also a substantive, denoting "friend," "lover," etc. See *Kyng Ali-saunder* (*ut sup.*), l. 2906: Chaucer, *Poetical Works*, vol. III, p. 217: Gower, *Conf. Amant.*, vol. I, pp. 243, 343: "Noither *lefe* no lothe northern . . . spared *lefe* no loth." Robert Mannyng (*ut sup.*), p. 75. And see pp. 113, 131, 134, 215, 220, 286. "Nether for *leiffe* nor for loth." *Chester Plays* (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 92. "For *lief* ne loth." Chaucer, *Poetical Works*, vol. III, p. 96. "Youre *leyfes* and your females." *Townley Mysteries* (*ut sup.*), p. 320. See also *Religious Pieces in Prose and Verse* (14th century?), p. 53 (1867): *Amis and Amiloun* (15th century?), l. 87: *Lyfe of Ipomydon* (15th century?), l. 2294: *Merlin* (1450-1460?), p. 693. Gower and Spenser, too, with many others, might here be quoted.

*Unlief*, "unbeloved," "disagreeable," is found in Lydgate, *The Tragedies*, etc. (Wayland's undated edition), fol. 2 v.; and in the *Chester Plays* (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 42.

*Lemman* or *leman*, "lover," "sweetheart," of old written *leofmon*, *leovemon*, *lefmon*, and *leveman*, was long ago shown to be *lief man*.

In the *Chester Plays* (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 169, is "gotten by *leffe* of kinde," in other words, "by natural love." Compare together the Anglo-Saxon for *love* and *lief*, namely, *lufe* and *leðf*.

"*Lefe-long*," qualifying *day*, for which see Mr. Halliwell's *Illustrations*, etc. (1845), and his *Dictionary*, is, apparently, for *lefe long*. Is it the same as our *live-long*. And did this originate as two words, *lief long*; the *lief* being ironical, like *precious*, in "*precious fool*"?

*Liefsome* is used by the Earl of Surrey. See Dr. Richardson's *Dictionary*. Its predecessor, *liefly*, occurs in *Early English Alliterative Poems* (15th cent.), p. 67; and in Thomas Chestre's *Romance of Launfal*, in Mr. Halliwell's *Illustrations*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 28. For *lefful*, "dear," "precious," see *Story of Genesis and Exodus* (*ut sup.*), ll. 155, 2524.

<sup>21</sup> "Androgeus him was *leovere*." Layamon, *Brut* (not long after 1204), vol. I, p. 306.

"*Levere* him were with his kinne." *Floriz and Blauncheftur* (about 1280), l. 806, in *King Horn*, etc. (1866).

"It were me *lever* than twenty pound worth lond," etc. Chaucer, *Poetical Works*, vol. II, p. 224. And see vol. III, p. 143.

"Him was *levere* his oghne [*i. e.*, own] deth desire." Gower, in *Political Poems and Songs*, vol. II, p. 14. "Now chese and take whiche you is *lever*." *Id.*, *Conf. Amant.*, vol. II, p. 205. See also vol. III, p. 281, etc., etc.

"So, withoute your better avyse, I and my brothyr purpose us to be with you ther at that tyme; for, the sonner, the *levyr* me." John Clopton (about 1454), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. I, pp. 284, 285. For the equipollent "the rather, the *levere*," see John Shillingford (1447), in *Letters and Papers* (Camden Society), p. 24. Note the similarity, here, to the German "je eher je *lieber*"; and compare "so lengre so *leovere*," in *Seinte Marherete*, p. 2.

"I have but on [*i. e.*, one] gowne at Framyngham, and an other here; and that is my *levere* gowne," etc. John Paston, Jr. (1462), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. II, p. 120.



seventeenth century, these words became, however, save in phrases, virtually extinct; no one then any longer venturing them, except Philemon Holland<sup>22</sup> and a few others, who affected the diction of a bygone age.

"My lord, Syr Gareth, is to me more *lever* to have and welde as my husband, than any kyng or prynce that is crystned." Sir Thomas Malory, *La Mort Darthur* (1469), vol. I, p. 242 (Southey's edition).

"That were me *lever*, sayd dame Elayne, than alle the gold that is above the erthe." *Id.*, *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 168.

Many more quotations in point will be seen in subsequent notes.

"A mon that were the *leovest*," etc. *Ancren Riwle* (13th century), p. 244.

"As *levest* him thought;" "The *levest* thing for thy luf." *Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight* (about 1320-1330), ll. 49, 1802 (ed. 1864).

"What signe is the *levest* to have . . . ?" *William of Palerne* (about 1350), l. 3213 (ed. 1867).

"Love is the *leveste* thinge that our Lord askith." William Langland, *Vision of Piers Plowman* (1362), Passus I, l. 180 (ed. 1867).

"Thre pointes, which, I finde, Ben *levest* unto," etc. Gower, *Conf. Amant.*, vol. II, p. 133.

"Yf that ye lyst to wedde her your self, that is me *levest*." Sir Thomas Malory (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 282.

"God knowyth myn entent, Whom I besech to send yowe your *levest* herts desyr." Sir Thomas Brews (1477), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. III, p. 177. "Your *levest* desyers." Margaret Paston (1477), *ibid.*, vol. III, p. 194.

But like references need not be multiplied.

Perplexed by "ye best and *leuiest* hors of al ye host," in Lord Berners's *Froisart* (1523-1525), vol. I, p. 12 (ed. 1812), I turned to the French, which has "le plus petit, maigre, et chétif cheval qu'il put trouver." The horse was, then, "the *least* and *leanest*."

Sir John Paston wrote, in 1474, instead of *levest*, *lesvest*, as though he thought he was having to do with a French word. See the *Paston Letters*, vol. III, p. 120.

<sup>22</sup> "My *leeft* and onely sonne" occurs in his *Cyrupaedia* (1632), p. 101: and see pp. 108, 207. See, further, his *Ammianus Marcellinus* (1609), pp. 147, 390. Holland was born in 1551, and died in 1636.

Mr. T. L. Kington Oliphant, in his *Sources of Standard English*, p. 286, names the adjective *lief* among "old Teutonic words, now obsolete, . . . which Tyndale unhappily did not employ in his great work [he did, however, if *lief* includes *liefer*], though they must have been household words in his childhood." Tyndale was born about 1477; and not only in his youth was *lief* rife, but to the end of his days, and long after. "To no man so *lieft*." Sir Thomas More, *Historie of King Richard the Thirde* (about 1513), p. 68 (ed. 1821). In the translation of Polydore Vergil, of the time of Henry VIII, published by the Camden Society in 1846, "*leeft* unto himme," etc., will be found at pp. 46, 81, 172, 294. For *liefer*, "dearer," etc., I might quote Alexander Barclay, George Ferrars, and Holinshed. Tyndale, too, has it, in his *New Testament*, 1 *Corinthians*, xiv, 19.

In "*him was lever have . . . Twenty bookes*,"<sup>23</sup> and the like,<sup>24</sup> we see specimens of the most ancient English forerunners of the group of phrases under consideration. The import of the quotation

As late as near the close of the seventeenth century, *lief*, "carus," was treated by lexicographers as if still popularly intelligible; witness William Robertson's *Phraseologia Generalis* (1681), and Adam Littleton's *Latine Dictionary* (1684).

That Shakespeare had any hand in the *Second Part of King Henry VI*, is doubted by many; and the fact that the expressions "mine *alderliefest* sovereign" and "my *liefest* liege" are found there, has some weight towards disposing one to abjudeicate it from it. Though Shakespeare, in dramas unquestionably his, again and again uses "as *lief*," he does not use *lief* otherwise, and also avoids its comparative and superlative; and the quaint *alderliefest* is far from being after his manner. What is still more significant, the passages of the *Second Part*, etc., which contain *alderliefest* and *liefest* are not in the old play of 1594, on which it is founded. Was there another form of the old play than that which we possess,—one giving those passages,—which has not come down to us? Robert Greene, among Shakespeare's early contemporaries, has the adjectives *lief*, *liefer*, *alderliefest*, and *aldertruest*. Can it be that Greene contributed to the *Second Part*, etc., in some form of it which is not known to have survived, and that the *alderliefest* and *liefest* spoken of above are from his pen? I might say more; but this is not the place to say it.

<sup>23</sup> Chaucer, *Poetical Works*, vol. I, p. 90. See also vol. II, p. 224; vol. III, p. 237.

<sup>24</sup> "*Leovere heom his to libben*," i. e., "to live is, to them, more desirable." Layamon, *Brut* (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 20.

"*Me wore levere*, quad Ioseph, Of eddi dremes rechen swep." *Story of Genesis and Exodus* (*ut sup.*), ll. 2085, 2086.

"*Me were leovere vorto don me touward Rome*." *Ancren Riwle* (*ut sup.*), p. 430.

"*Levere was him to be forsworen*." Anon., *Havelok the Dane* (about 1280), l. 1423 (ed. 1868). "*Me wore levere* I wore lame." *Ibid.*, l. 1938. And see ll. 1193, 1671.

"Ac monnis flesch lever him was Than ony corn that ony mon has." *Kyng Alisaunder* (*ut sup.*), ll. 694, 695.

"*Him were levere meten* one hen Then half an oundred wimmen." Anon. (from a MS. temp. Ed. I), in *Reliquiae Antiquae*, vol. II, p. 272.

"*Me wor lever to be dedh*." Anon. (early in the 14th century), *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 146.

"*Me were levere be ded*." Anon., *Maximon* (in or before temp. Ed. II), *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 121.

"For lever me is this lif to have," "*lever me hade have woned* in wilderness." *William of Palerne* (*ut sup.*), ll. 3098, 3308. And see ll. 855, 994, 2022.

"Yit war me lever that thai so ware." Anon., *The Seven Sages* (14th century?), l. 2843.

"For hym was levere stele uppon hem than come uppon hem with a bataile opounliche." John of Trevisa (1387), in *Higden's Polychronicon* (ed. 1865, etc.), vol. II, p. 395.

is: "To have twenty books was more acceptable to him." The idiom is substantially Anglo-Saxon;<sup>25</sup> and the pronoun which it exhibits is in the dative case.

"For *me were lever to lacke* breth Than spoken of her name amis." Gower, *Conf. Amant.*, vol. I, p. 177. See also vol. I, pp. 270, 305, 329, etc., etc.

"*Me ware lever say fyve wordes in herte* devoutely, thane fyve thousande with my mouthe withowttene lykyng." *Religious Pieces in Prose and Verse (ut sup.)*, p. 38. See I *Corinthians*, xiv, 19.

"*Me ware lever prevely be prykyd* to the harte." Anon., *Morte Arthure* (14th century?), l. 2649 (1865).

"*Him was lever to ryn* than ryde." Anon., *Syr Gowghter* (15th century), in Utterson's *Select Pieces*, etc. (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 171.

"*Hem is lever Lete* make her hyves," etc. Anon., *Palladius on Husbandrie* (about 1420?), p. 38 (1873).

"Nay, for *hym were lever to have* his tonge drawn oute." *Merlin (ut sup.)*, p. 302.

"*It were me lever*, sayd the quene, to *dye* in the water, than to falle in your enemyes handes, and there be slayne." Sir Thomas Malory (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 93.

"*Them over lever to leese* all that thei have besyde, then to have suche a vil-lany done them." Sir Thomas More, *Historie*, etc. (about 1513, *ut sup.*) p. 109.

"And, tharefore, if thou be putt fra thi reste by devocyone, whene *the ware leveste* be stille tharat, by thy childire, thy servantes," etc. Richard Rolle de Hampole (died 1349), *English Prose Treatises* (1866), p. 30.

"And elles may she nought fulfille What thinge *her were levest have*." Gower, *Conf. Amant.*, vol. I, p. 96; and see vol. I, p. 170; vol. II, p. 52. Also *id.*, in *Political Poems and Songs*, vol. II, p. 5.

"Therfor lerne the byleve *levest me were*." Anon., *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede* (about 1394), l. 16.

"Thai may have redy passage owt of oure land, from what port thai come too unto what port *thayme is levest to drawe* to by youre advis." King Henry V (1417), in Sir Henry Ellis's *Original Letters*, etc., Third Series (1846), vol. I, p. 63.

"Arthur sone hathe take the land That *hym was leveste* in to lende." Anon., *Le Morte Arthur* (before 1460?), ll. 3058, 3059 (1864).

Compare the German, as in: "*Ist es Euch lieber*, so nehmt die Kerze."

<sup>25</sup> "Be ðæm is awriten ðæt betra bio se geðyldega wer ðonne se gilpna, forðæmpe *him bið lifre* scande to ðolianne ðonne ðæt god to cyðanne ðæt he digollice deð, ðylæs he for ðæm undeawe ðæs gilpes hit forleose. Ac ðæm *gilpnan bið lifre* ðæt he secge on hiene selfne, gif he hwæt godes wat, ge ðeah he nyte hwæt he soðes secge, *him is ðeah leofre* ðæt he leoge ðonne him mon ænigra ungerisna to wene." *King Alfred's West-Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care* (edited by Mr. Henry Sweet), p. 216.

Mr. Sweet has obligingly communicated to me the following extract from an Anglo-Saxon will, in which a man says of his wife: "Gif *hire lifre sie* on mynster to gangenne," or, "if it be more agreeable to her to go into a convent."

To the first half of the fourteenth century, perhaps, belongs the origin of expressions like "I *have lever* it *layne*,"<sup>26</sup> or "to *conceal* it I *regard as preferable*"; and "As she was *essheked* [*i. e.*, asked] of him, whether sheo *hadde lyver have* him than his sone that stode ther by, into housbond, sheo chees his sone."<sup>27</sup> Of very

<sup>26</sup> *William of Palerne* (*ut sup.*), l. 918. And see l. 546. As to "I have lever," for "I have *it* lever," *it* is similarly omitted in our "think best, better, fit, good," in the old "think long," and in "make sure," "take upon," etc., etc.

Hearne (*ut sup.*) quotes, at p. cxcvii, the following anonymous passage, which he doubtfully assigns to the year 1310: "I *have lever* that thou do me to dethe then defowle my body."

"Yet *have* I *lever leese* My lif"; "Yit *hath* this brid . . . *Lever to be* in forest," etc. Chaucer, *Poetical Works*, vol. II, p. 248; vol. III, p. 242.

"This knight *hath lever for to deie*," etc. Gower, *Conf. Amant.*, vol I, p. 93.

"And, by my trouthe, I *have wel lever* No more *kyn* than my a b c." From some verses probably written about 1418, in *Political Poems and Songs* (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 243.

"Sith *lever* I *have* with some edge tole *To slee* my selfe, than lyve in slaunder and dole." Lydgate, *Tragidies*, etc. (*ut sup.*) fol. 44 v. and 45 r.

"*Lever* I *have* my life now *to lose*, Rather than soyle my wydowes chastitie." *Id.*, *ibid.*, fol. 49 v. Even Hallam uses *rather*, as here, superfluously: "But those who had introduced the bill very wisely thought it better to sacrifice a point of dignity, *rather* than lose so important a statute." *Constitutional History* (ed. 1842), vol. II, p. 206, foot-note.

"I *have lever to be* deed than to be cristin." *Merlin* (*ut sup.*), p. 592. See also p. 241.

"And y *have leefir forto sie* sumwhat of the trewe substancial answers longing therto," etc. Bp. Reginald Pecock, *Repressor*, etc. (about 1456), p. 78. See also pp. 85, 91.

Between 1456 and 1464, the Rev. Thomas Howes and Sir Robert Williamson wrote, respectively, "I *have lever* other men *go*" and "I *have lever* to *go*." *Paston Letters*, vol. I, p. 407, and vol. II, p. 81.

"For I *have lever dye* with worship than lyve with shame." Sir Thomas Malory (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 280. And see vol. II, p. 275.

"Rather than it shold be done, I *have lever to quytte* yow, and gyve yow my parte, soo that his lyf may be saved." Caxton (1483), in the *Knight of La Tour-Landry* (ed. 1868), p. 101.

"For I *have lever* abyde respyt," etc. *Ludus Coventriae* (*ut sup.*), p. 121.

<sup>27</sup> From the anonymous prose addition to Robert of Gloucester's *Chronicle*, quoted by Hearne (*ut sup.*), p. 12.

"Theo riche . . . saide they *hadden*, sikirliche, *Leovere steorve*," etc. *Kyng Alisaunder* (*ut sup.*), ll. 1232-1234.

"They *hadde lever to don* soo," etc. Anon., *Richard Coer de Lion* (*temp.* Ed. I?), l. 6105.

"Tryamour swore by Goddes myghte, I *had lever* it had on the lyghte." *Syr Tryamour*, in Utterson's *Select Pieces*, etc. (*ut sup.*), vol I, p. 56.

much less common occurrence is the superlative *liefest* similarly collocated, as in the sentence: "For, yf I shold speke of all, I shold never make an ende. So saye me, thenne, wherof thou *hast lievest for to here*."<sup>28</sup> *Have* and *had*, in these passages, are

"Otherhuil hy byeth ynogh awaked to nyedes thet hi *hadden lever lyse* vour messen thanne ane zuot other ane slep." Dan Michel, *Ayenbite of Inwoyt* (1340, in the Kentish dialect), p. 31.

"At grete festes, and for straungeres, thei setten formes and tables, as men don in this contree; but thei *had lever sytten* in the erthe." Sir John Maundevile, *Voyage and Travaile*, etc. (1356), p. 29 (ed. 1839).

"For also moche as many men ne may not suffre the savour of the see, but *hadden lever to gon* by londe," etc. *Id.*, *ibid.*, p. 126.

"I *had lever go* to Rome." Townley *Mysteries* (*ut sup.*), p. 308.

"*Lever ich had to dyen*." Chaucer, *Poetical Works*, vol. II, p. 191.

"I *hadde lever to be lewed*," etc. Gower, *Conf. Amant.*, vol. I, p. 295. See also vol. I, pp. 212, 240, etc.

"He wolde hurte ne greve no body, but *hadde lever to selle* his wyves golden vessell," etc. Anon., *Cronycle of Englonde* (1483), sig. F 3 v. (ed. 1510). And see sig. I 3 v., I 4 r., K 3 r., R 5 v.

"I *had lever* thus homely *for to dine*." Rev. Alexander Barclay, *Mirroure of Good Maners* (about 1523), sig. D 3 r. (ed. 1570).

"He woulde not breake hys pennance; he *had lever dye*." Anon., *Lyfe of Roberte the Devyll*, l. 1072, in Mr. W. C. Hazlitt's *Remains*, etc., vol. I, p. 260. *Had* is here a preterite.

"*Lever he hadde for to be deed* than langour in soche maner." *Merlin* (*ut sup.*), p. 540. Here, too, *had* is a preterite.

Of what is about to be asserted the proofs have been supplied by a careful scrutiny of scores of old books and modern, and by a collection of several hundred pertinent quotations which this scrutiny has yielded.

From about 1450, *had liefer* enjoyed great vogue for a century or so, and then gradually declined in popularity. It is noticeable, that, in the reprint of Tyn-dale's works which was published in 1573, either Day or Fox twice altered the reformer's *had liefer* into *had rather*. *Merlin*, Sir Thomas Malory, and Lord Berners are studded with *had liefer*; and the expression was a favourite with Alexander Barclay, Sir Thomas More, Tyndale, and Sir Thomas Elyot. After 1600, or thereabouts, few except archaic or otherwise peculiar stylists, such as Philemon Holland, are found to employ it. At no time since its introduction can it, as a provincialism, or colloquialism, have been in abeyance. Since the year 1800, it has been practically accepted by Southey and the Rev. H. F. Cary; and Mr. Charles Reade uses it repeatedly. Nay, we read, in the pages of a very elegant living writer: "And yet *had* men *liefer* by knowledge never *find* that which they seek, than by love possess that thing which, also, without love, were in vain found." Mr. Walter H. Pater, *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873), p. 32.

<sup>28</sup> Lydgate (?), *The Booke of the Pylgremage of the Sowle* (1413), p. 75 (ed. 1859).

"Yef he lyve longe, he shall be the beste knyght that ever was, and that I *hadde levest to resemble*." *Merlin* (*ut sup.*), p. 456.

not auxiliaries, just as they are not in the passages here ensuing :

"So gret liking and love I have that lud to bihold,  
That I *have lever* that love than lac al mi harmes."<sup>29</sup>

"Notheles, ful feole and fille  
Beoth yfounde, in heorte and wille,  
That *hadde lever* a ribaudye  
Than to here of God other of Seynte Marie."<sup>30</sup>

"For he *had had lever* than all the good of the world, he myghte have ben revenged upon Sir Mellyagraunce."<sup>31</sup>

"*Having leifer* to committ their cause to open disputing, then to seeme, to the people whom they had subverted, to have nothing to say," etc.<sup>32</sup>

*Had had*, in the third of these extracts, is to be inter-

"Of alle knyghtes that ben on lyve, excepte thre, I *had levest have* yow." Sir Thomas Malory (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 109.

"Yet *had* I most *liefest to yield* and confess the matter," etc. George Caven-  
dish, *Life of Cardinal Wolsey* (about 1560), vol. I, p. 249 (Mr. Singer's ed.).

<sup>29</sup> *William of Palerne* (*ut sup.*), ll. 452, 453. The sense is: "So great pleasure and love have I in beholding that man, that I reckon that love of more account than the being free from all my sorrows."

"If the place that is beside Walsyngham stand cler, I *have* hit *lever* then the tother." Sir John Fastolf (1449?), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. I, p. 94.

<sup>30</sup> *Kyng Alisaunder* (*ut sup.*), ll. 19-22.

"I *hadde lever* than my schert," etc. Chaucer, *Poetical Works*, vol. III, p. 224.

"I *had* her *lever* than a mine Of gold," etc. Gower, *Conf. Amant.*, vol. II, p. 130.

"I *had lever* thene alle Fraunce . . . Fyghte with the," etc. *Morte Arthure* (*ut sup.*), ll. 1344, 1345. See also ll. 872, 4160.

"For the saule *had lever*, that in payn dueles, A day of pardon than anythyng elles." Richard Rolle de Hampole, *Pricke of Conscience* (*ut sup.*), ll. 3936, 3937.

"I *had hym lever* than othyr fyve; For he was stronge in stowre." Anon., *Sir Cleges* (14th century?), ll. 491, 492.

"I *had lever* than al the gold betwixe this and Rome, I had ben there." Sir Thomas Malory (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 100. See also vol. I, pp. 90, 138, 141, 281; vol. II, pp. 368, 394.

Like expressions are used by Margaret Paston (1450), the Rev. Thomas Howes (1454), Richard Calle (1469), and Sir John Paston (1470, 1477, 1486), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. I, pp. 111, 307; vol. II, pp. 351, 416; vol. III, pp. 190, 338.

<sup>31</sup> Sir Thomas Malory (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 379.

<sup>32</sup> Rev. Dr. Thomas Stapleton, *The History of the Church of Englande* (1565), fol. 25. Dr. Thomas Fuller, where he quotes the passage recited in the text, very gratuitously surmises, in "having rather," some error of the press.

preted by "would have deemed,"<sup>33</sup> *Have*, *had*, and *having*, in the other extracts, are one with "deem," "should deem," and "deeming," respectively.

*Have*, the neuter verb, meaning "be obliged," takes an infinitive. But very different is the nature of *have*, etc., in the passages cited above and in subjoined notes. The occasional presence, after those words, of *to*,<sup>34</sup> and also of the objective case, shows, at the same time, as I have already said, that they are not there auxiliaries.

<sup>33</sup> "But thei lefte fulle of hir owen reste in contemplancon, when thei *had* welle *lever have ben* stille, that, for love of hir even cristene, thei intermettid hem with worldely besynes, in helpynge of hir sugettis; and, sothly, that was charite." Richard Rolle de Hampole, *English Prose Treatises (ut sup.)*, p. 25. The writer meant "*had had* welle *lever be*."

"Ich *had lever*, til domesday, *Have lived* in care and wo." Anon., *Amis and Amiloun* (15th century?), ll. 2321, 2322. Correct to "*had had lever . . . live*."

"Thou seiste trewe; for *hadde lever a be* in grete aventure than thou sholdest dye." *Merlin (ut sup.)*, p. 35. Here, besides ellipsis, there is the same fault as above.

Tyndale writes: "Lucretia *had lever have been* slain, if he had not been too strong for her, than to have lost her glory." *Doctrinal Treatises*, etc. (1848), p. 185. He ought to have put *had had lever be slain*. Note, too, the illogical double preterite. This error, which many persons still fall into, was ancient even in Tyndale's day.

In *Merlin (ut sup.)*, p. 468, we read: "I *hadde lever* she *hadde be* biried all quyk, than this *hadde hir befallen*." Here there is much freedom of ellipsis.

"That, I kno well, the kyngis grace *hadde lever hadde be* done," etc. John Flamank (1503?), in *Letters and Papers Illustrative of the Reigns of Richard III and Henry VII*, vol. I, p. 232. The second *had*, in this extract, is an example of the past-participial infinitive. It is here cut down from *have had*.

<sup>34</sup> As *to*, after *bid*, *dare*, *feel*, *help*, *make*, *need*, etc., may now sometimes be dispensed with, so it was, of old, occasionally dispensed with after, for instance, *advise*, *begin*, *behoove*, *beseech*, *chance*, *charge*, *command*, *constrain*, *dare* (defy), *desire*, *endeavour*, *enforce*, *enjoin*, *forbid*, *force*, *forget*, *grant*, *intend*, *know*, *license*, *move*, *observe*, *ought*, *permit*, *persuade*, *seem*, *suffer*, *suppose*, *teach*, *think*, *use*, *vouchsafe*, *will* (wish), *wish*. To the same category belongs *cause*, the *to* after which is still dropped by many Scotchmen. Add *can* (be able), *do* (cause), *learn* (teach), *leave*, *like* (please), *lust* (wish), *mow* (be able); and likewise *beteem*, *fortune*, *gin*, *list*, *rede*, *ween*, *wit*, *wone*.

Contrariwise, *to* was once often put after *hear*, *let*, *see*, etc., as might be proved out of the *Paston Letters*, Lord Berners, Sir Thomas Hoby, Dr. Henry More, etc., etc.

As well as after many verbs, an ellipsis of *to* was formerly allowed after certain adjectives, in phrases. *To* is dropped, after *allowable*, by Bp. Pecock; after *better*, by Lydgate, Alexander Barclay, Sir Thomas Wilson, Lord Herbert, etc.; after *free*, by Gower; after *lawful*, *profitable*, and *speedful*, by Bp. Pecock; after *wholesome*, by Hoccleve; after *wont*, by Bp. Pecock and Abp. Warham; after *worthy*, by Bp. Pecock and Alexander Barclay.

The infinitive, as *to die*, instead of *dying*, after *had liefer*, etc., is nothing strange, as an old idiom,<sup>35</sup> if we bear in mind the sense of the words preceding it. "I think to die more desirable," which is still tolerated, was once a current mode of expressing "I think dying more desirable," or "I think it more desirable to die."

Even as late as Queen Elizabeth's time, the infinitive accompanied by its sign being still sometimes put after *had liefer*, it was distinctly recognized that *had* is there a notional verb; and, as the context forbids the idea that it imports obligation, it must have been felt that *liefer* is an adjective. Thus: "The poete *had liefer to halte* in his life then in his verse."<sup>36</sup>

Like *ἔχειν*, *habere*, *avere*, *haber*, *avoir*, *haben*, our *have*, in the natural course of development, came to signify "deem," "hold,"

Hence, there is nothing that is not normal enough about *had liefer die*, instead of *had liefer to die*.

<sup>35</sup> "We wold do thus myche, as for *to put* the coort in contenuans." John Paston (1465), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. II, p. 246.

"As for *to kysse* yow, said Sir Launcelot, I maye doo that and lese no worshyp." Sir Thomas Malory (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 377. See also vol. I, p. 170; vol. II, pp. 88, 199, 413.

"The grete lordes of Englonde were ayenst *to conferme* the peas and the trewes above sayd." Anon., *Cronycle of Englonde* (1483, *ut sup.*), sig. T 4 r.

"But, trust me, Cōridon, there is diversitie Betwene *to have* riches, and riches to have thee." Rev. Alexander Barclay, *Egloges* (about 1520), sig. A 5 v. (ed. 1570).

"As touchyng *to gyve* them saveconduct," etc.; "As *to retourne* all the landes agayne," etc. Lord Berners, *Froissart* (1523-1525), vol. I, p. 757; vol. II, p. 599 (ed. 1812). "Without *to wyll*," etc. *Id.*, *The Golden Boke*, etc. (1534), sig. Mm 7 r. (ed. 1546).

"As touching *to please* God," etc.; "Then was Christ to blame for *to say*, that," etc. Tyndale (1532), *Expositions*, etc. (1849), pp. 102, 121.

"For, as for [*sic*] *accuse* folke openly for heresye," etc. Sir Thomas More, *Apologye* (1533), fol. 226 v.

"And shee putteth in hazarde *to staine* the renowme of honestie." Sir Thomas Hoby, *The Courtyer* (1561), sig. Q 7 v. (ed. 1577).

"As *to come* to him, he was not then so determined." Richard Grafton, *Chronicle* (1569), vol. II, p. 156 (ed. 1809).

"After he had done . . . *to rave*," etc. Anon., *New Custome* (1573), Act I, Scene II.

"They thought the same difference to bee . . . that is betwixt *to sin* and not to sinne." Anthony Stafford, *Niobe* (1611), pp. 75, 76.

<sup>36</sup> James Sanford, Translation of Agrippa (1569), fol. 179 v. See also fol. 104 v. and 106 v.; and the extract lately made from Stapleton.

For earlier instances, see Tyndale, *Doctrinal Treatises*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 393; *Expositions*, etc. (*ut sup.*), pp. 22, 306.



"regard," "consider," "account," "rate";<sup>37</sup> that is to say, originally denoting possession, it grew to be factitive.

<sup>37</sup> King Alfred (*ut sup.*), p. 134, writes: "He wilniað ðæt hie mon *habbe* for ða betstan and ða halgestan."

"The Chane and alle the men of Tartarye *han* the nombre of 9 in gret reverence." Sir John Maundevile (*ut sup.*), p. 228.

"But men *han* hem suspect of eresie for many causis." Wicliffe, *Three Treatises* (1851), p. 43. And see p. 44.

"Ye schul also *have* in suspect the counseil of such folk," etc. Chaucer, *Poetical Works*, vol. III, p. 146. See also vol. III, p. 152.

"Trusty and welbeloved, I greet you wel; praying you that you wil *have* in tendernesse and favor my welbeloved cousin," etc. John, Lord Scrope (1432), in the *Plumpton Correspondence* (Camden Society), Historical Notices, p. xxxvi.

"*Hadde* in favor." Clement Paston (1461), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. II, p. 43. In the next page, John, Lord Beauchamp (1461) uses the same expression.

"That cyte was never *hadde* in worshyppe." Anon., *Cronycle of Englonde* (1483, *ut sup.*), sig. A 4 r. "But, with an hevy hoste, he torned ayen, and was *hadde* worthy to suffre, for [*i. e.*, for all] his ryghtwysenes." *Id.*, *ibid.*, fol. 2 r. of an arbitrary signature between Z and Aa.

"Men *had* it ever inwardely suspect." Sir Thomas More, *Historie*, etc. (about 1513, *ut sup.*), p. 126.

"Farthermore, wepyng, he besought and required hym, for all amyte and love whiche had ben bytwene them, and for all the faythfull service which he had done to hym in foretyme, nat to *have* hym suspected in so cruell a dede." Rev. Alexander Barclay, Translation of Sallust (Pynson's second ed.), fol. 55 v. "Nat to *have*," etc., represents "ne . . . suspectum *se haberet*"; and, accordingly, Barclay's "have" may be a Latinism.

"Truely, wyse men *have* hym as suspect," etc.; "was *had* in great reputacion." Lord Berners, *The Golden Boke*, etc., (*ut sup.*), sig. G 3 r. and M 2 r.

"*Had* in most vile reputation"; "*had* in moost price." Roger Ascham, *Toxophilus* (1545), pp. 52, 113 (Mr. Arber's edition).

"And of this ariseth, that men . . . *have* them in very small reputation," etc. Sir Thomas Hoby (*ut sup.*), sig. N 7 v. See also sig. Q 8 r. "To be *had* in suspition of any vice." *Id.*, *ibid.*, sig. Y 7 v.

"King Rycharde *had* them in suspition and gealosie." Richard Grafton, *Chronicle* (1569), vol. II, p. 149 (ed. 1809).

For *had*, with "in estimation," "in reputation," "in fear," "in veneration," see Nicholas Lichefield, *The First Booke of the Historie*, etc. (1582), fol. 34 v., 55 r., 84 r., 92 v.

"*Have* them in great estimation and admiration"; "we *have* the temples in great respect and reverence"; "*had* alwaies in singular recommendation." T. B., *The French Academie*, Part I (1586), pp. 383, 680, 711 (ed. 1589).

The Biblical "*had* in derision," "*had* in honour," and "*had* in reverence" present no difficulty to the run of readers; but it is all but certain that "I pray thee *have* me excused" is generally misunderstood, and by the educated as well as by the uneducated.

It is pertinent to remark, here, that *had*, for "should have,"<sup>38</sup> "would have." appeared in our language as far back, at least, as the

<sup>38</sup> *Should, should have*, etc., long had senses which, for the most part, now seem very strange.

"And thys daye rennyth a tale, that the Duke of Bretayne *sholde be* ded. I beleeff it not." Sir John Paston (1472), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. III, p. 60.

"I am informed that one of my brethren, late Bishop of Chichester, *should be departed*." Abp. Parker (1568), in *Correspondence*, etc. (1853), p. 331.

"Even as spitefully as unlearnedly, you affirm that Beza *should teach* that St. Luke wrote false Greek," etc. Rev. Dr. William Fulke, *A Defense*, etc. (1583), p. 135 (ed. 1843). And again at p. 138.

"Of his contre the signe was Thre fisshes, which he *shulde bere* Upon the penon of a spere." Gower, *Conf. Amant.*, vol. III, p. 56. See also vol. III, pp. 257, 298.

"And, as touchyng that poynt, that the seide maier and comminalte *sholde fayne and coloure* their answer with sotelnesse, yu desiryng of lenger delay, they remytte tham to your grete wysedomes," etc. John Shillingford (1448?), *Letters and Papers (ut sup.)*, p. 132.

"Sir Thomas Howes hadde a free chapell at Castr, wher of the gyfte longyth to me, whyche chapell, as I understande, *scholde be* in the olde tyme, er the place at Caster wer bylte." Sir John Paston (1469), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. II, p. 339.

"At this question, al the lordes sat sore astonied, musyng much by whome thys question *should be ment*, of which every man wyst himself clere." Sir Thomas More, *Historie*, etc. (about 1513, *ut sup.*), p. 71.

"About this epistle hath ever been much doubting, and that among great learned men, who *should be* the author thereof." Tyndale, *Doctrinal Treatises*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 521.

"Socrates . . . saieyth . . . he would followe him as though he *should followe* God himself." Sir Thomas Wilson, *The Rule of Reason* (1551), fol. 15 (ed. 1567). And see fol. 77 (*bis.*) Also *id.*, *The Arte of Rhetorike* (1553), fol. 99 (ed. 1567).

"The first guess is, what Damasus *should mean* by these words." Bp. Jewel (1565), *Works* (ed. 1845, etc.), vol. I, p. 160.

"But didst thou hear, without wondering, how thy name *should be hanged and carued* upon these trees?" Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Act III, Scene II.

"Sir W. Warren told me how my Lord Brouncker *should take* notice of the two flaggons he saw at my house at dinner, at my late feast, and merrily, yet I know enviously, said I could not come honestly by them." Samuel Pepys (1667), *Diary*, etc. (*ut sup.*), vol. IV, p. 204. See also vol. IV, p. 398 (*bis.*) We still say, for instance, "whom *should* I meet," etc., putting *should* for *did*, but only to express something unexpected.

"Don't forget the bailly of Hykelyng, who said I *should forge* [*i. e.*, had forged] evidence," etc. Sir John Fastolf (1450), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. I, p. 168.

"And quatkin tre it *sulid ha bene*, His eldres tald him all bedene." *Cursor Mundi* (about 1290), ll. 21579, 21580.

eleventh century ; and *would have* emerged as long ago, certainly, as the twelfth century.

The *had* in *had liefer* was rarely, it seems, a simple preterite. Primarily it implied, in this phrase, a condition, and then, dropping the implication of conditionality, became a sort of gnomic or adagial aorist.<sup>39</sup> It was, apparently, owing to the popularity which

"It is talkyd here how that ye and Howard *schuld a strekyn* togueder on the scher-daye, and on of Howards men *schuld a strekyn* yow twyess with a dagere, and soo ye schuld a ben hurt, but for a good dobelet that ye hadde on at that tyme." John Paston (1461), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. II, p. 42.

"Gods, if you *Should have ta'en* vengeance on my faults, I never Had lived to put on this." Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*, Act V, Scene I.

*Should* has, also, been used as expressive of the proximate future.

"Therfor, whan he *schuld deye*, the Cardinales saide he was not worthi to be biried in Seynt Petir cherche, for the habundauns of blood which he had spilt. And he answerd ful sobirly," etc. Rev. John Capgrave, *Chronicle of England* (about 1464), p. 124 (1858).

"So, likewise, Christe, when he *should be taken* of the Jewes, saied to his Apostles, . . . 'slepe on, sirs, and take your rest,' " etc. Sir Thomas Wilson, *The Rule of Reason* (1551), fol. 69 (ed. 1567). Also *id.*, *The Arte of Rhetorike* (1553), fol. 77, 98 (ed. 1567).

"When he *should depart* from our ship, he required, by signes, of Nicholas Coello, to have his boat to carrie him to lande." Nicholas Lichfield, *The First Booke of the Historie*, etc. (1582), fol. 15 r.

These passages, a few out of scores collected from various sources, illustrate the laxity, in comparison with present usage, with which moods and tenses were occasionally employed, in former times.

For the age of *had*, for "should have," and that of *would have*, see Mr. T. L. Kington Oliphant's *Old and Middle English*, pp. 131, 177.

<sup>39</sup> The time when *had*, *went*, etc., long potential, began to be used quasi-aoristically was, I suspect, much more remote than I am now prepared to show it to have been.

"It semeth that it were skylful [*i. e.*, reasonable], and also necessary, that al these wardeyns *wente* to their pilgrims, for to kepe them redily fro malice of their enemyes." Lydgate (?), *The Booke*, etc. (1413, *ut sup.*), p. 7.

"If thou burnest blood and fat together to please God, what other thing dost thou make of God than one that *had* lust to smell to burning flossess [*i. e.*, scum]?" Tyndale, *Expositions*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 215.

"And, when he saith it is sin to believe too much, I say we *had* the more need to take heed what we believe, and to search God's word the more diligently, that we believe neither too much nor too little." *Id.*, *An Answer*, etc. (1530), in *Works* (Parker Society), vol. III, p. 95.

*Had need* will be treated of at length, before I shall have done. In this place I adduce a few passages in which, as just above, the expression is modified.

"Item, ther be dyvers of your tenantrys at Mauteby that *had* gret ned for to be reparyed ; at [for "yet" ?] the tenaunts be so por that they ar not a [*i. e.* of]

attached to the word topically thus accepted, that *have liefer*, as if akin to a superfluity, was at no time in very great vogue.

Considering that the foregoing exposition, or the more essential part of it, cannot but be known to many students of older English, it is unexpected to be told, by Mr. Oliphant, that the verb in *had liefer* "reminds us of the Latin *mihi est*." <sup>40</sup>

Closely allied to *had liefer* is *had as lief*, "should consider as equally acceptable," "would consider as equally acceptable." <sup>41</sup> This expression, though, possibly, not so old as *had liefer*, is yet of venerable antiquity. <sup>42</sup> The modern *would as lief*, like *would*

power to repare hem." Margaret Paston (1465), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. II, p. 176.

Bp. Joseph Hall wrote, in 1605: "Those which seek to mend the pace of time, spurre a running horse. I *had* more need to redeem it with double care and labour, then to seek how to sell it for nothing." *Works*, p. 41 (ed. 1648).

Also, in 1610, regarding a clergyman, as such: "No man *had* such need to keep a strict meane." *Ib.*, p. 314.

"They that worke hard all day *had* more need to rest then dance all night." William Prynne, *Histriomastix* (1633), p. 255.

The annexed passages, again from Tyndale, are also worthy of consideration.

"Where the officers be negligent, and the woman not able to put herself to penance, if she *went* where she is not known, and there marry, God is the God of mercy." *Expositions*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 52.

"For, if I were bound to do, or believe, under pain of the loss of my soul, anything that *were* not written, nor depended of that which is written, what holp me the scripture that is written?" *An Answer*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 26.

<sup>40</sup> *Old and Middle English*, p. 442. Professor F. J. Child writes: "I hadde lever = *j'aimerais mieux*; 'hadde' being, of course, in the subjunctive. Germ. *lieb haben*, 'to like,' is much the same." *Memoirs of the American Academy*, New Series, vol. IX, p. 312. The French equivalent here given is one of sense only, not one of syntax. *Lieber haben*, in some constructions, is not merely "much the same" as *had liefer*, but exactly correspondent to it; and the adjective *lieb* in *lieb haben* similarly answers to our *lief* in "had as *lief*."

Prof. George L. Craik, in his excellent *English of Shakespeare* (ed. of 1857, p. 89), explicitly teaches that *I had liefer* means "I should hold it preferable."

<sup>41</sup> "I *had as lief go* as stay" originally imported "I should consider going to be equally acceptable with staying"; and, afterwards, its *had* was modified into a species of aorist. There is, in the phrase just instanced, more positive implication of conscious inclination than there is in "I *had liefer go*," "I *had rather go*."

<sup>42</sup> First I may quote for it the *Chester Plays* (about 1328?), pp. 48, 72:

"In fayth, Noye, I *hade as leffe* thou slepte."

"I *hade as lewe* my selfe to die, As thou, my deare darlinge."

"I *had as lefe be* in the wood." Anon. (*lemp.* Hen. VI?), in *Reliquiae Antiquae*, vol. I, p. 3.

*liefer*, which is by no means of recent birth,<sup>43</sup> is justified by signi-

"The kyng, . . . saying that he *had as leef sette* his coroune biside hym, as to se him were a cardinals hatte," etc. Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester (1440), in *Wars of the English in France*, vol. II (1864), p. 441.

"Sum man *had as lefe to dye*." Anon. (*temp.* Hen. VI), in *Reliquiae Antiquae*, vol. I, p. 74.

"I *had as lef be killid* of the in Ingland, as of a Sarasine in Surre." Rev. John Capgrave, *Chronicle of England* (about 1464), p. 141.

"They *had as leffe*, al most, *be tenants* to the Devell as to the Duke." Margaret Paston (1465), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. II, p. 194.

"We *had as leef to departe* from oure lyves." Sir Thomas Malory (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 366. See also vol. II, p. 154.

Further quotations might be given from the *Interlude of the Four Elements* (1510?), p. 18 (ed. 1848): Mary, Queen of France (1514), in Sir Henry Ellis's *Original Letters*, etc., First Series (ed. 1825), vol. I, p. 118: Lord Berners, *Froissart* (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 342; vol. II, pp. 186, 324: Tyndale, *An Answer*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 7: Sir Francis Bryan (1531), in *State Papers*, vol. VII (1849), p. 278: Sir Thomas More, *Apology* (1533), fol. 224 v., 226 r.: Earl of Sussex and others (1540), in *State Papers*, vol. VIII, p. 302: Sir John Cheke (1554), in *Nugae Antiquae* (ed. 1804), vol. I, p. 49: Edward More (1557), in Utterson's *Select Pieces*, etc. (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 114: Sir Thomas Wilson, *The Arte of Rhetorike* (1553), fol. 71 (ed. 1567): Abp. Parker (*ut sup.*, 1573), p. 428: Anon., *New Custome* (1573), Act II, Scene III.

And so I might go on and refer to a great number of Elizabethan writers, including Bp. Pilkington, Thomas Nash, Lyly, Shakespeare, Chapman, Ben Jonson, etc., followed by Bp. Joseph Hall, Robert Burton, Dr. Peter Heylin, Sir Th. Browne, William Cartwright, Dr. Th. Fuller, Sir Roger L'Estrange, Aubrey, Sir William Temple, and many of their contemporaries and successors, among the latter of whom are Swift, Samuel Richardson, Goldsmith, "Junius," R. B. Sheridan, Gen. Conway. For still more recent patrons of *as lief*, and Horne Tooke's remark on *lief*, etc., see my *Doctor Indoctus* (1880), p. 50.

*Have as lief*, for a reason suggested where I discuss *have liefer*, is very much less common than *had as lief*. Some quotations for it follow:

"And thus a frere or a prest *hath as leve to be* seuerly a confessour of a lord or of a lady, as to be a simple bischop." Wicliffe, *English Works*, etc. (1880), p. 333. One MS. is said to have "mych leve."

"I *have as leef thy leessing* as thi soth saw." Anon., *Repy of Friar Daw Topias* (1401), in *Political Poems and Songs* (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 87.

"Happen what may happe, I *have as leef to abyde* my fortune as to seeke it and not fynde it." Mary, Queen of Scots (1568), in Sir Henry Ellis's *Original Letters*, etc., First Series (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 249.

*I have lief* was preceded by *me is lief*. "Let nothing to the *be lej*, Which to another man is gref." Gower, *Conf. Amant.*, vol. I, p. 370. And see note 20, *supra*.

<sup>43</sup> I recollect none but modern instances of *would as lief*. To this the older expression is changed by Thomas Sheridan, where Swift writes, in the Conclusion to *A Tale of a Tub*: "I *had as live* he may be the person as Congreve."

fications of *lief*, adjective and adverb,<sup>44</sup> that is to say, "willing" and "willingly," which I have not before had in view.

Here are oldish quotations for *would liefer*, with one for *would liefest*:

"But they that *wolde lever be* in the quier," etc. *Myroure of Our Ladye* (before 1450), p. 29. See also p. 264.

"They *lever wolde dye* folys than byde a strype." Rev. Alexander Barclay, *Shyp of Folys* (1509), vol. I, p. 257 (ed. 1874).

"He *wolde lever dye* a marter." Rev. William Roy and Jerome Barlowe, *Rede me and be nott wrothe* (1528), p. 42 (Mr. Arber's edition).

"Now see whether of these two conditions you *would leaver have*." Rev. Richard Bernard, *Terence in English* (ed. 1598), p. 213.

"Sir, my trust is, ye will not judge me unconstant for this universitie, in choice of my living, but rather one that *wold levest live* as I find myself fittest to serve my prince and my contrye." Roger Ascham (1553), in *Original Letters*, etc. (Camden Society, 1843), p. 18.

Compare the German: "Ich *will lieber* ein armer Mann werden, als erröthen vor ihm."

<sup>44</sup> "The Almanz alle wer *lefe* be suorn to be Inglis" Robert Mannyng (*ut sup.*), p. 257. And see pp. 246, 339. For *lief*, "glad," "willing," as here, see also *William of Palerne* (*ut sup.*), l. 517: *Generydes* (about 1440), l. 5507: *Religious Pieces*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 80. Already in the Anglo-Saxon *Blickling Homilies*, p. 109, we have "inwit to *leof*," "too *fond* of guile." Chaucer's "I am nought *leef* to gabbe," in vol. I, p. 204, *Poetical Works*, is rendered, by Tyrwhitt: "I am not *pleased* to prate; I take no pleasure in prating."

*Lief*, joined with *loth*, "unpleasant," besides meaning "pleasant," as in Chaucer, vol. I, p. 147, often signified "willing," "consenting," "pleased," "glad"; *loth* bearing its present sense. For proofs, see Gower, *Conf. Amant.*, vol. I, p. 234; vol. III, pp. 13, 50: a poem called *On the Death of Edward III* (1377), and the *Libel of English Policy* (1436), in *Political Poems*, etc. (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 215, and vol. II, p. 162: *Townley Mysteries* (*ut sup.*), p. 71: *The Seven Sages* (15th century?), l. 1881: Skelton, *Poetical Works* (ed. 1843), vol. I, p. 309. See also Barclay's *Shyp of Folys*, vol. II, p. 103 (ed. 1874), the *lefe* at which place the editor wrongly defines by "agreeable."

In an erroneously explained passage in *Sir Gawayne*, etc. (*ut sup.*), l. 1251, *liefer* is equivalent to "gladder." And so it is in the *Townley Mysteries* (*ut sup.*), pp. 37, 40, 89. The first of these three passages runs: "Nay, yit were I *leyffer* my child were dede." Alexander Barclay has: "Sylla . . . sayd that he was sent from Marius, the consul, to enquire if he wold *lever* peace, or war." Translation of Sallust (*ut sup.*), fol. 83 v.

Of *liefest*, "gladdest," there is an instance in the last extract in the note immediately preceding.

*Be leyf*, by *leyff*, in the *Townley Mysteries* (*ut sup.*), pp. 164, 275, has been interpreted "farewell." Add *be lyve*, found in Mr. W. C. Hazlitt's *Remains*, etc., vol. I, p. 25.

*Unleven*, in the *Chester Plays* (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 10, looks like an error for *unleve*, "unwilling," "loth."

Before dismissing idioms in which *lief* and *liefer* play a part, I have to speak of a notable catachresis found in connexion with the

For the adverb *lief*, meaning "affectionately," "willingly," "voluntarily," "gladly," "fain," see *Story of Genesis and Exodus* (ut sup.), l. 49: *Havelok the Dane* (ut sup.), ll. 1888, 2606: *Morte Arthure* (ut sup.), l. 1035: *Townley Mysteries* (ut sup.), p. 243: *Ludus Coventriae* (ut sup.), p. 267. "It is death to doe it: as *leeft* die as seek." Bp. Andrewes (1618), *XCVI Sermons* (ed. 1661), p. 111.

The comparative of this *lief* is synonymous with *sooner*, rather, in their secondary sense. "But *lever* than this worldes good She wolde have wist how that it stood." Gower, *Conf. Amant.*, vol. II, p. 46. See also vol. II, p. 92. "The Pope myght *lewyr* wyshe to wype . . . by lissens, with hys brevys, then to send them," etc. Sir John Hackett (1533), in *State Papers*, vol. VII, p. 532. See also the Rev. Thomas Howes (1454), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. I, p. 307: Tyndale, *Expositions*, etc. (ut sup.), pp. 270, 275: George Cavendish (ut sup.), vol. I, p. 329.

As will be seen shortly, *had* was once saddled with a confusing variety of significations. This fact and others being remembered, perhaps it is not wholly certain that, in the following passage, *liefer* is not an adverb: "He seide *lever* he hadde lose the lesser frende than the greete frende." Richard Calle (1464), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. II, p. 161. And it may, I think, even be questionable how we are to take the same word in this verse of Spenser's: "For *lever* had I die then see his deadly face." However, the philological consciousness of any time but our own is a matter of most delicate handling.

*Liefest*, "most gladly," "fainest," occurs in Gower: "Alle women *levest* wolde Be sovereign of mannes love." *Conf. Amant.*, vol. I, p. 96. It signifies "most willingly," in some anonymous verses *On the Deposition of Richard II* (1399), in *Political Poems and Songs* (ut sup.), vol. I, p. 372.

As has been pointed out, *lief*, "beloved," came to mean "loving," etc. In other words, at first objective, it got to be subjective, to boot. And this kind of change is by no means unexampled. Consider *dearly* in "dearly beloved," and then in "loving dearly." Sentiments may be *tender*, but not after the manner of a laudable beefsteak. "*Preferable* esteem," for "esteem marking preference," and like phrases, abound in Samuel Richardson and some other authors of the last century. Again, the poet Gray has, in his second letter to West: "Do not think that I make a merit of writing to you *preferably* to a good supper." Lydgate has *credible* for *credulous*; and, in 1447, the Rev. H. Webber used *desiderable* for *desirous*. Bp. Fisher wrote, in 1509: "Our Lord hath herde my prayer, and also *acceptably* taken up my petycyon." *English Works*, Part I (1876), p. 21. Bp. Richard Mountagu and Feltham, respectively, make *disconsolate* qualify *darkness* and *misery*. *Comfortable* now has "enjoying ease" as one of its significations; and a phthisical patient, equally with his disease, is spoken of as *consumptive*.

On the other hand, subjective adjectives become objective. *Curious* and *suspicious*, in "a *curious* machine," "a *suspicious* circumstance," have many a fellow. Bp. Bale and James Sanford substitute *desirous* for *desirable*, just as Tacitus puts *credulus* for *credibilis*. See, for further germane particulars, my *Modern English*, pp. 167, 168, foot-note; and *On English Adjectives in -able*, etc., p. 77, foot-note 4.

latter of these words. Chaucer supplies several examples of it, as in :

"*Him hadde wel lever . . . That sche hadde had*," etc.

"I dar wel say *hire hadde lever* a knyf," etc.

"Al *had hir lever han had* a knave childe," etc.

"*Him had lever* himselfe to mordre and dye," etc.<sup>45</sup>

For all the four passages, as here read, there is excellent manuscript authority ; and, as might be expected, the peculiarity which marks them is repeatedly paralleled in our older literature.<sup>46</sup> We

<sup>45</sup> *Poetical Works* (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 206 ; vol. II, pp. 39, 138 ; vol. VIII, p. 91. Mr. Bell has, in the second passage, *sche* ; but *hire* (her) is the reading of several MSS., which, in the other passages, also, have the pronoun in the nominative.

*Him seems*, "it seems to him," I speak of elsewhere. But the same words have been used for "he seems."

"*Hym seemes* wearye on his waye"; "Greater then thou *hym seemes* to be." *Chester Plays* (*ut sup.*), vol. II, pp. 51, 75.

"This lady was gyrd with a swerd with a thwong, al with gold apparaylled. *Hyr semed* wel a lady of ful huge estate, as duchesse, or pryncesse ; ne none was, that sawe *hyr*. that he ne tremblyd for drede." Lydgate (?), *The Booke of the Pylgremage*, etc. (1413, *ut sup.*), pp. 36, 37.

*She seemed*, used with equal lawlessness, occurs in the same work. See note 65, *infra*.

<sup>46</sup> In Mr. Utterson's *Select Pieces*, etc. (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 139, there occurs, in *Syr Degore*, an anonymous poem assigned to the beginning of the fourteenth century:

"*Me had lever* than all my kyngdome here,  
That nowe is seased into my hande,  
That *I were* fayre out of this lande."

For two obscure passages, containing, respectively, *him had liefer* and *liefer had him*, see the anonymous *Richard Coer de Lion* (*temp.* Ed. I?), l. 3502 (in Weber's *Metrical Romances*), and the *Romans of Partenay* (about 1500-1520), l. 3205.

It is in place to adduce Shakespeare, *Richard II*, Act III, Scene III :

"*Me rather had* my heart might feel your love,  
Than my unpleas'd eye see your courtesy."

I may add, from the *Ludus Coventriae* (*ut sup.*), p. 274 :

"On of you hath betrayed me,  
That at my borde with me hath ete :  
*Bettyr it hadde hym for to be*  
Both unborn and unbegete."

Elsewhere, however, than in such phrases as those now before us, *had* has been used, carelessly enough, sometimes for *had been*, and sometimes for *were*, etc.



have, in them, a confusion of the ancient *him* or *her were liefer* and the later *he* or *she had liefer*. Of very slight weight, if of any at all, is the suggestion, that, in *him had liefer*, for instance, *him* is to be taken as an exclamation, with an ellipsis before it, and another after it; as if the sense were, "consider him: he had liefer."

I now proceed to investigate expressions of which "*I had rather go* than stay" and "*I had rather that he stayed*" are samples.

"I aansuerd, yff my maister had, before the maryage, be laboured, hyt *had* moche esyer to bryng aboute then now." William Worcestre (1458), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. I, p. 433.

"At hes comyng, he undrestode ye were not there; and, if ye *had*, my Lorde desired you to come and spoken with hym." Richard Calle (1461), *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 55. And so Margaret Paston (1465), *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 208.

Samuel Pepys wrote, in 1661: "The Benevolence proves so little, and an occasion of so much discontent everywhere, that it *had* better it had never been set up." *Diary*, etc. (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 346.

According to a lection which, all circumstances weighed, may be the one we should accept, Shakespeare has, in the *Second Part of King Henry IV*, Act V, Scene IV: "Thou *hadst* better thou hadst struck thy mother, thou paper-faced villain."

"I *hadde* had goode inowe, And never more *have* needed to goon to the ploughe." Lydgate, *Minor Poems* (1840), p. 190.

"Other wyse, the sayd kyng *had* not so sone *have* returnyd in to Castyl." John Style (1509), in *Memorials of King Henry VII*, p. 433. Style's *had* is for *would*, or else implies necessity.

"*Had* not he *have* be, we shold never have retourned." Sir Thomas Malory (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 152.

"For, *had* nott yit that danger *have* been, I mygh [*sic*] yit have ben at home," etc. Sir John Paston (1475), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. III, p. 139. And so William Wayte (1450), *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 151; and often throughout the work.

"Cleanthes might well have fail'd in his judgment, *had* not accident *have* helped him to the obscured truth." Owen Feltham, *Resolves*, etc. (ed. 1696), p. 37.

"By all lyklyhode, yf any stuf or pouaire of Englissh pouple had be here, he *might never have had* escaped, by reason, untaken." Bp. Bekynton (1442), in *Official Correspondence*, etc., vol. II, p. 213.

"For the which the seid Sir John, . . . *would have* largely *have* recompensed." William Paston (1482?), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. III, p. 297.

Such extracts might be multiplied to any extent, with others exhibiting *hath* for *hath been*, *might* for *might be*, *would* for *would have*, *should* for *should be*, etc.

In the Scotch "he had obliged to go," the peculiarity, as I am informed by Dr. J. A. H. Murray, is not in its *had*, but in its *obliged*, which is to be taken adverbially, in the sense of "perforce."

*Rathe*, *rather*, *rathest*, "quick," "speedy," "hasty," "early," "quicker," "speedier," "prior," "former," "older," etc., were long in use, as adjectives; and so they were, as adverbs, signifying "soon," "sooner," "soonest," etc., etc.<sup>47</sup>

If, owing to the natural prepossession entertained for what is established in existence, the adjective *rather*, like *first* and *foremost*, acquired, in succession to the sense of preceding in time, that of greater eligibility, there is no cause for surprise.

Robert of Gloucester<sup>48</sup> has "deye we *rather* wyth honour"; and Bp. Pecock<sup>49</sup> writes: "Certis, it is miche more likeli that, bi the stoon, the persoon of Peter schulde be undirstonde, *rather* than the persoon of Crist, or eny other thing than the persoon of Peter." While, in these passages, *rather* no longer points to comparative chronological position, it is, in the first of them, subjective, and, in the second, objective, and to be rendered, in turn, "preferently" and "preferably." In correspondence to the adverb thus altered

<sup>47</sup> *Rathe*, as a literary word, was falling into desuetude, when Milton sang of "the *rathe* primrose"; and it was the same with *rather* and *rathest*, in all their acceptations specified in the text. This being the case, the subjoined quotations are not without interest.

"Intending to aske her what shee made there at so *rathe* an houre," etc. James Hayward, *The Banish'd Virgin* (1635), p. 191.

"First, I will begin with strawberries, as the first and *rathest* fruit in the beginning of summer." William Vaughan, *Directions for Health* (revised ed. of 1633), p. 55.

Bishop Sanderson, in 1647, used *rathest*, as an adverb, for "soonest." See his *Works* (ed. 1854), vol. I, p. 353. In the edition of 1681, vol. II, p. 198, *rarest* is given, by mistake.

"God makes no difference betweene the *rathnesse* and latenesse of time." James Hayward (as just above), p. 220.

It has not, to my knowledge, been recognized, by our recent lexicographers and glossarists, that, equally with the culinary *rare*,—a contraction of *rather*,—*rathe* has borne the sense of "underdone." Littleton, in his *Latine Dictionary* (1684), renders *ovum sorbile* by "a *rathe* egg" and "a poached or *rath*-roasted egg." *Rere* I pass by.

*Rather* *er*, "sooner than," is seen in Gower, *Conf. Amant.*, vol. III, p. 45; and *rather* *or*, the same, in the notes to the *Chester Plays* (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 209.

"Our *rathers*" was used by Palsgrave (1530), for "our *forefathers*."

Wicliffe has the adjective *rathermore*, "former."

*Likely* grew from *like*; and *rathely*, adjective and adverb, was, of old, *now* and then put for *rathe*. The adverbs *rathelike* and *radly*, also, are found.

<sup>48</sup> *Chronicle* (about 1300), Hearne's ed. of 1810, p. 397.

<sup>49</sup> *Repressor* (about 1456), p. 441. See also pp. 106, 111, 112, 392, 423, 516.

in meaning,<sup>50</sup> the adjective *rather* would, of course, be synonymous with "preferent" and "preferable." As one with "preferent," it is unknown to me; but there is evidence, though it has escaped the attention of philologists, that it has actually been employed to import "preferable," "to be preferred," "better," "more important."

An anonymous poem, supposed to date before 1430, contains the couplet:

"It is *rathir* to bileeve the waginginge wiinde  
Than the chaungeable world that makith men so blinde."<sup>51</sup>

Bp. Pecock is next to be adduced: "And, certis, in such aventure, it were *rather* to truste to the conscience and discrecion of him which is in state of a reuler, than to the conscience of hem whiche ben in the state of hem that ben to be reulid."<sup>52</sup>

Then comes Lord Berners, who contributes: "For I had [*i. e.*, should deem] *rather* the welth [*i. e.*, weal, welfare] of hym that hath maryed my doughter, than of hym that never dyd nothyng for me, though I have maryed his suster."<sup>53</sup>

Sir Philip Sidney has: "Poesie . . . hath *rather* be troubled in the net with Mars, then enjoy the homelie quiet of Vulcan," etc.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>50</sup> *Ratherest* is put, by Shakespeare, into the mouth of the pedantic Holofernes. But the word has been used in all gravity.

"For, if you otherwyse behave your selfe in the reading of it, it shall anon lose the vertue and quicknesse in stirring and moving of your soule, when you woulde *ratherest* have it sturred." Bp. Fisher (1535), *English Works*, Part I (*ut sup.*), p. 352.

"When you have most plentie, then *ratherest* provide against wante." William Barkar, *The Bookes of Xenophon*, etc. (1567), sig. E 4 v.

Among living provincial substitutes for *rather*, registered in various glossaries, are *ratherly*, *retherly*, *ratherlins*, *ratherlings*.

<sup>51</sup> *Hymns to the Virgin and Christ*, etc. (1867), p. 86.

<sup>52</sup> *Repressor* (*ut sup.*), p. 393.

<sup>53</sup> *Froissart* (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 41. Compare Lord Berners's "*had rather* the welth" with "*have lever* that love," "*hadde levere* a ribaudye," "*have hit lever*," "*had lever* . . . A day of pardon," and "*I had hym lever*," at p. 293, *supra*, text and foot-notes 29, 30. In connexion with the passage cited in the text, that which follows is, on several accounts, noteworthy. "What is that realme that sleeth them that wold their welth, and are angry with them that woulde helpe their yll?" Lord Berners, *The Golden Boke*, etc. (1534), sig. Hh 8 r (ed. 1546).

<sup>54</sup> *An Apologie for Poetrie* (1581), p. 61 (Mr. Arber's edition).

Samuel Pepys wrote, in 1667: "But her mother, by command of the Queen-mother, thought *rather* to bring her into England; and the King of France did give her a jewel," etc.<sup>55</sup>

Also, the next year: "But it was denied, so furious they are against this bill: and thereby a great blow, either given to the King or Presbyters, or, which is the *rather* of the two, to the House itself," etc.<sup>56</sup>

From an anonymous translation I take: "To have *rather* be indifferent in a sublime employment, than excellent in an indifferent, is a desire rendered excusable by generosity." <sup>57</sup>

These extracts <sup>58</sup> being scattered over a space of two hundred and fifty years, or thereabouts, no doubt the discovery of many others to match them, belonging to that period, would reward continued research. Nor is the conjecture unreasonable, that, *had rather* apart, the infrequency of occurrence, in writing, of the special signification of *rather* <sup>59</sup> which they exemplify, may illustrate the fortune of a colloquialism. Quite possibly, the history of this *rather* may be compared with that of the word *palate*, in its sense of "uvula," so familiar to every American. *Palate*, thus understood, though a deviation from the living speech of the old country, classical and provincial alike, may fairly be inferred, from forth-

<sup>55</sup> *Diary*, etc. (*ut sup.*), vol. IV, p. 313. "Thought *rather*" I take to mean, here, "judged it to be *better*"; but I am not blind to the possibility, the bare possibility, of wresting another sense from the words.

<sup>56</sup> *Diary*, etc. (*ut sup.*), vol. V, p. 184. This passage was indicated to me, before I had read Pepys with an eye to his language, by Dr. J. A. H. Murray, whom I have to thank for the quotation next following, also. Both are from the vast magazine of extracts destined for the great *English Dictionary* now in preparation.

<sup>57</sup> *Gracian's Courtier's Manual Oracle, done into English* (1685), p. 18.

<sup>58</sup> Those which follow, as being, at least at first sight, less cogent, are assigned a subordinate position:

"For I had *rather* then any good, that this kinde of people were driven sumwher oute of my sight," etc. Ralph Robinson, Translation of *Utopia* (1556), p. 52 (Mr. Arber's edition).

"Before God, I had *rather* then an angell [the coin so called] I had chosen some other." Thomas Deloney, *Thomas of Reading* (1632), p. 24 (ed. 1827).

Not wholly irrelevant is even this: "I had *rather* anything, almost, than that you should strain yourselves," etc. Swift (1711), *Works* (ed. 1778), vol. XIII, p. 241.

<sup>59</sup> The adverb *rather*, "preferably," may have forerun the adjective to which it answers. Still, *rather*, as it was of old an adjective, and one bearing senses from which its later sense could be readily developed, differs very widely, as importing "preferable," from the adjectives *often*, *seldom*, and *soon*, which are, without dispute, transmutations of adverbs.

coming facts,<sup>60</sup> to have belonged, at least for some time, to the accepted vocabulary of educated Englishmen. The dictionaries of our day will be explored for it in vain.

And now it is submitted whether *had rather*, in "we *had rather go* than stay,"<sup>61</sup> was not, with those who originally used the

Except to very recent dictionaries, *rather*, "somewhat," is as unknown as *rather*, "preferable." See p. 282, note 5, *supra*.

To enumerate the various shades of meaning which have attached to the adverb *rather*, is beyond the scope of my present paper.

<sup>60</sup> "The *palat* of his mouth was down, when hee lay upon his *pallet*." Richard Hodges, *The Plainest Directions for the True Writing of English*, etc. (1649), p. 15. Hodges speaks of the two words italicized as "altogether alike in sound."

"My cold and pain in my head increasing, and the *palate* of my mouth falling, I was in great pain all night." Samuel Pepys (1664), *Diary*, etc. (*ut sup.*), vol. III, p. 49.

Adam Littleton (*ut sup.*) explains *columella*, the medical term, as "the swelling of the uvula, or falling down of the *palate* of the mouth." Guy Miegé, in his *Great French Dictionary* (1687, 1688), gives, as the definition of *luette*, "the *palate*, or uvula, a little piece of spongy flesh in the root of the roof of the mouth"; and he also has: "The *palate* of the mouth down, *la luette abbatue*."

In various English dialects, the *uvula* is now called the *kecker*, the *pin of the throat*, etc.

<sup>61</sup> "For the poer man *had rather have* a 100 marks in hand than a 100 pound by any assignement," etc. Sir John Fortescue (about 1471), *Works* (1869), p. 454.

"Ellys, by my trowthe, I *had rather that ye* never *maryed* in yowyr lyffe." Margaret Paston (1478), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. III, p. 231.

"Yett *haid I rether dye*, For his sake, ons agaynie." Anon. (15th century), in *Reliquiae Antiquae*, vol. I, p. 72.

"For ye sayd ye *had rather lose* the towne." William Joddopkan (about 1481), in the *Plumpton Correspondence* (Camden Society), p. 42. *Had* is a preterite here.

"I trow you *had rather have* it of my owne hand," etc. German Pole (about 1499), *ibid.*, p. 140. Also *id.* (1504), *ibid.*, p. 193.

"For i *hadde rather have* no parte off hys goodds," etc. Dean Richard Pace (1513?), in Sir Henry Ellis's *Original Letters*, etc. (*ut sup.*), Third Series (1846), vol. I, p. 176.

"They *had rather* that their lorde therle shulde take to his wyfe the kyng of Englandes daughter," etc. Lord Berners, *Froissart* (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 168.

"Of trouth, if it laie in my handes to do, I *had rather gyve* lyfe to a simple oxe than to a malicious ideot." *Id.*, *The Golden Boke*, etc. (1534), sig. N 1 r. (ed. 1546). Similar to these two passages there are some forty others in the works from which they are taken.

expression, simply substituted for *had liefer*, as consciously an exact synonym of it. Indeed, the attitude of suggestion, on this

"They do all things of a good zeal, they say: they love so well, that they *had rather burn* you than that you should have fellowship with Christ." Tyndale, *Doctrinal Treatises*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 43. See also pp. 101 and 523.

"I *had rather have spent* a crowne." Roger Ascham, *Toxophilus* (1545), p. 28 (Mr. Arber's edition). And at p. 30. Also *id.*, *The Scholemaster* (1563-1568), pp. 51, 78, 131, 159 (Mr. Arber's edition).

"I *had rather referre* that to Abell, Adams sonne." Thomas Langley, *Abridged Translation of Polydore Vergil* (1546), fol. 66 (ed. 1551).

"I *had rather louse* it." Robert Savill (1546?), in the *Plumpton Correspondence* (*ut sup.*), p. 251.

"If Marcus Attilius Regulus *had rather lose* his life then," etc. Sir Thomas Wilson, *The Rule of Reason* (1551), fol. 33 (ed. 1567). Here *had* is a preterite. See also fol. 80 (*bis*).

"No, I *had rather be torne* in pieces, and slaine." Rev. Nicholas Udall, *Roister Doister* (before 1553), Act IV, Scene V.

"Let them, therefore, have him in admiracion, honour him, reverence him, folowe him, who so ever *hade rather perishe* than to be saved." J. Olde, *Anti-christ* (1556), fol. 122. See also fol. 165, 182, 187.

"I *had rather be good* then wilie." Ralph Robinson, Translation of *Utopia* (*ut sup.*), p. 23. See also pp. 24, 38, 62, 84, 90, 92, 98, 121, 140 (*bis*), 142.

"They *hadde rather obey* him then you." William Barkar, *The Bookes of Xenophon*, etc. (1567), sig. T 8 v. See also sig. Y 7 r.

"They *had rayther suffer* destruction to overtake them," etc. Stephen Gosson, *The Schoole of Abuse*, etc. (1579), p. 65 (Mr. Arber's edition). And see pp. 68, 73 (*bis*).

"Plato, therefore, whose authoritie I *had* much *rather* justly *conster* then unjustly resist," etc. Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apologie for Poetrie* (1581), p. 58 (Mr. Arber's edition). See also pp. 24, 36, 59.

"I *had rather die* then suffer so long time . . . I *had rather die* then to tarrie upon the same." Nicholas Lichfield, *The First Booke of the Historie*, etc. (1582), fol. 40 v.

"So they *had rather say*," etc. Rev. Gregory Martin (1582), in Fulke, about to be quoted, p. 249. And see pp. 422, 527, 569.

"So I *had rather call* them." Rev. Dr. William Fulke, *A Defense*, etc. (1583, *ut sup.*), p. 72. And in ten other places.

"I *had rather seate* myselfe there," etc. Sir Walter Raleigh (1584), in Bliss's *Letters*, etc. (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 521.

"We . . . *had rather die* than turne from the lawes of our God." T. B., *The French Academie* (1586, *ut sup.*), p. 92. And so twenty-three times again.

"*Had* I *rather now laugh*, and heereafter weepe, then now weepe, and heereafter laugh, not for dayes, or yeares, but for ever and ever?" Bp. Babington, *A Profitable Exposition*, etc. (1588), p. 127 (ed. 1615).

"Yet *had* I *rather any thing befall* me, then loose my sonne." Rev. Richard Bernard, *Terence* (*ut sup.*), p. 249.

point, is warrantably changed to that of contention, when it is seen that the infinitive after *had rather* was frequently introduced along with the rhematic sign; <sup>62</sup> a circumstance which definitively excludes

Noteworthy is the vulgarism in the following: "But I *had rather have* your rome *as* your companie." Anon., *Marriage of Wit and Wisdom* (1579?), p. 27 (ed. 1846).

"*Had* the Apostles *rather a man should perish* of famine then be releived of his owne?" Edward Brerewood (died 1613), *A Second Treatise of the Sabbath* (1632), p. 17. Here, with some probability, *had* is preteritive.

In the *Chester Plays* (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 166, is the line: "Whether *had* you *rather have* paine, or blesse?" Those plays are referred to about 1328, but are printed as they were transcribed in 1592; and the editor remarks, in vol. II, p. 210, that "the persons who made the various copies from the original MS. of the *Chester Plays* took great liberties with the text." Hence I attach very little credit to the evidence of those plays, that *had rather* was known in the fourteenth century. The earliest date at which I have found it is recorded at the beginning of this note; a date which ill comports either with Dr. Johnson's opinion, or with Dr. Crombie's assertion, as to its age, already cited in this paper.

<sup>62</sup> They *had rather to be taxed* yerely, to the halfe of theyr substances, than to be under the handes of the Englisshemen." Lord Berners, *Froissart* (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 266. See also vol. I, p. 562.

"I *had rather to bee* Cato," etc. *Id.*, *The Golden Boke*, etc. (*ut sup.*), sig. L 7 r. See also sig. C 6 r., O 4 r., Dd 2 r.

"I thincke thou *haddest rather* alyve to be *flayne*." Anon., *Thersytes* (1537).

"*Rather had* they to dwell still in the earthly beggary," etc. Bp Bale (1550), *Select Works* (1849), p. 439.

"He counted it much better for himself, and *had rather to be loosed* than to live." Bp. Nicholas Ridley (1555), *Works* (1841), p. 425. *Had*, pretty certainly, is a preterite here.

"They love no more strawe; they *had rather to fast*." Thomas Tusser, *A Hundreth Good Poyntes of Husbandrie* (1557), st. 40.

"And, for so much (quoth he) as thou *haddest rather to conveye* awaye the rebell and traytour to our gods, then deliver him up," etc. Rev. Dr. Thomas Stapleton, *The History*, etc. (*ut sup.*), fol. 17.

"I *had rather . . . to use* the common accustomed speache of all men, then the odious new termes of a fewe." *Id.*, *A Fortresse of the Faith*, etc. (1565), fol. 3. See also fol. 29.

"The like is reported, in divers histories, of the Grecians at this day, who doe hate so much the name and dominion of the Latines, as they *had rather to endure* all the miseries which dayly they suffer under the Turke, for their religion, and otherwise, then, by calling for aid from the west, to hazard the subjection to the said Latines." Rev. Robert Parsons, *Leycesters Commonwealt* (1584), p. 6 (ed. 1641).

"Yet, alas! how much *rather had* you, I know, *to have* still enjoyed, then thus supplied his life!" Rev. John Gaule, *A Defiance to Death* (1630), The Epistle Dedicatorie.

the supposition that *had* there ungrammatically supplanted an auxiliary. If instances of "we *have rather* go," and the like, are extremely rare, it is, I surmise, because *have liefer* was fast waning

"Wherefore he contracted with all the graziers and rich farmers thereabouts, who *had rather* to give him, every quarter, a certain sum of money, then to be liable to those thefts and dangers, both by day and night." Anon., *Robin Hood* (1662), p. 7 (ed. 1827). *Had* is here in the past tense.

Before *had rather* arose, *would rather* had obtained for ages. Its *rather*, besides being an adverb, is subjective.

As preterite of the notional verb *will*, *would* used to be connected with a following verb by *to*.

"Elles we *wolde* truly to *have had* tyme," etc. John Shillingford (1448), *Letters and Papers* (Camden Society), p. 55. See also pp. 40, 47, etc., etc.

"Jac Napes *wolde*, one the see, a maryner to *ben*." Anon. (about 1450), in *Political Poems*, etc. (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 232.

"It semyth, be my moders langage, that she *wold* never so fayn to *have be delyveryd* of her as she woll now." Margaret Paston (1453), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. I, p. 251.

"It was uncertayne, it was hyd, what the wysdome of God *wolde to be understande* by this aspercyon or sprenklynge of blode." Bp. Fisher (1509), *English Works*, Part I (1876), p. 110.

"Who that hath wisdome *would* rather deafe to *be*, Then dayly to heare such vile enormitie." Rev. Alexander Barclay, *Egloges* (*ut sup.*), sig. B 2 r. (ed. 1570).

"He thought I *wolde* not, for a thowsand pounds, to *ren*, onlesse I were as well trymmed as I have byn in tymes past." Edward, Duke of Buckingham (1516 to 1521), in Sir Henry Ellis's *Original Letters*, etc., Third Series (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 216.

"Here I *would* not More to *flit* from his literal plain sense." Tyndale (1533), in *Works* (Parker Society), vol. III, p. 252.

"Therfore it were no marvaile that Saincte Frauncis *wolde* his brethern to *be* obedient to the Bisshoppe of Rome, being their prelate." Roland Lee and Thomas Bedyll (1534), in *Letters on the Suppression of the Monasteries* (Camden Society), p. 43.

"The goddes ymmortall *wold* hym to *bee borne* into this world." Rev. Nicholas Udall (before 1557), in *Original Letters*, etc. (Camden Society), p. 5.

"Certaine Jewes, hearing Christians swearing in most fearful maner, as if they meant to have pulled Christ out of Heaven, said they wondred they *would* to outrage him, if they did beleve that he died for them." Anon., *A World of Wonders* (1607), p. 39.

"I *would* rather never to have light, than not to have it always: I *would* rather not to have light, than not to communicate it." Bp. Joseph Hall (died 1656), *Works* (ed. 1837, etc.), vol. XI, p. 98. See also p. 100 of the same vol.

It may be noted that the past participle *would*, whose existence "Webster's" *Dictionary* denies, occurs not only in Chaucer and Lord Berners, but in Dr. Donne's *Auncient History of the Septuagint*, p. 216 (ed. 1633). Moreover, Bp. Sanderson, in 1620, used the substantives *woulder* and *woulding*.



to obsolescence, when *had rather* came in. Still more prochronous would be "*us were rather go*."

In order to explain *had rather*, I recurred to *had liefer*. It is needful, however, to go back a stage further, or to, for instance, "*us were liefer go*," the precursor of "*we had liefer go*," in order to work out the rationale of "*we had better go*."<sup>63</sup> Punctually analogous to "*us were liefer go*" is our remote forefathers' "*us were better go*."<sup>64</sup> Of this there first sprang up a corruption,

Now, for those who may choose to look upon the *had*, in *had rather to*, as an auxiliary, and as having been put, by carelessness, for the notional *would*, there is no escape, that I can see, from the further assumption, that the *to* of their superseded *would rather to* was retained by still greater carelessness. But, even if the *to* were away, and the *would* were not notional, why should the auxiliary *had* of such theorists have usurped the rights of another word, and in violation of syntax? An appeal to the *had* of *had better* is nothing helpful.

As to *would rather*, the following extracts exhibit it in unwonted contexts:

"How many that lyve in horryble synne, that yet have the faythe of Chryst Iesu, and wolde rather dye or they shold renye theyr faythe! But, for all that, they be not justyfyed." Bp. Fisher (1521), *English Works* (*ut sup.*), p. 328.

"I have conceived that hope of your goodnes, that ye wold rather my person to bee saved then spilled." Rev. Nicholas Udall (bef. 1557), in *Original Letters*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 4.

<sup>63</sup> Under *had*, Dr. Johnson writes: "'I had better,' 'you had better,' etc., means the same as 'it would be better for me or you,' or 'it would be more eligible.' It is always used potentially, not indicatively; nor is *have* ever used to that import." And then come quotations for *had rather* and *had better*, though the former of them has not been mentioned, and though the definition given of the latter does not fit it. There is nothing to show that Dr. Johnson knew what *had better* succeeded; and it is plain that he was unacquainted with the preteritive *had rather*, and with the old "I have liefer," "I have as lief," etc.

<sup>64</sup> "*Better him wer* with eise in clostre *haf led* his life." Robert Mannyng (*ut sup.*), p. 172. See also pp. 91, 198. "*So betere him were*" is the Anglo-Saxon of *St. Mark*, ix, 42.

"And therfore *you is better* hyde youre counseil in youre herte," etc.; "*The is better holde thy tonge stille than to speke*." Chaucer, *Poetical Works*, vol. III, pp. 142, 147.

"*Betere me were ded* Then thus alyve to be." Anon. (*temp.* Ed. II, or earlier), in *Reliquiae Antiquae*, vol. I, p. 122.

"Into the whiche if that he slide, *Him were better go* beside." Gower, *Conf. Amant.*, vol. III, p. 241. See also vol. II, pp. 94, 296; vol. III, p. 14.

"*Hym hade bene better*, in good faye, *Hade spared* oyntmente that daie." *Chester Plays* (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 12.

"*Hym were bettyr* never to be sayn On lyve, be nyth ne day." *Ludus Coventriae* (*ut sup.*), p. 38.

"*Me were bettur* be hengud and drawyn." Anon., *Thomas and the Fairy Queen* (before 1450?), in Mr. Halliwell's *Illustrations*, etc. (1845), p. 65.

"we were better go";<sup>65</sup> and then, the dissimilarity of *had better*

"*Hem were beter take the furre,*" etc. Anon., *Knight of La Tour-Landry* (about 1372?), p. 31.

"*The Duck had be beter then a m<sup>li</sup>. that it had never be don.*" Margaret Paston (1465), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. II, p. 250.

"Whether is me better to treate with Kyng Arthur, or to fyghte?" Sir Thomas Malory (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 56. See also vol. I, pp. 12, 29, 237; vol. II, p. 262.

<sup>65</sup> "*She hadd ben beter to have ben stille, thanne to have reproved a man opynly afore the companye.*" *Knight of La Tour-Landry* (*ut sup.*), p. 32.

"*Thowe haddyst be better have gold or fee: More nede therto thou hade.*" Anon., *Sir Cleges* (14th century?), ll. 425, 426.

"*Bettur he were, to yow sey y, So to do, then for hunger dye.*" Anon., *Kynge Robert of Cysille* (about 1390?), in Mr. W. C. Hazlitt's *Remains*, etc., vol. I, p. 278.

"*I ware the better dye.*" Anon. (15th century), in *Reliquiae Antiquae*, vol. I, p. 73.

"*Thou hadest ben better have be a myle behynde,*" etc. *Merlin* (*ut sup.*), p. 652.

"*I were better be hangyd.*" *Townley Mysteries* (*ut sup.*), p. 99. See also pp. 187, 234.

"*Peraventure he had ben better to have performyd my desyer.*" John Paston (1477), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. III, p. 197.

"*He were better to ben hylle.*" *Ludus Coventriae* (*ut sup.*), p. 401. See also pp. 284, 349.

"*Thou were better flee by tymes.*" Sir Thomas Malory (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 202.

Additional apposite passages are at hand from the Rev. Alexander Barclay, Lord Berners, Tyndale, Sir Thomas More, H. Brincklow (about 1542), Bp. Jewel, Roger Ascham, J. Sanford (1569), Stephen Gosson, Sir Philip Sidney, Nicholas Lichefield, George Whetstones, the Rev. Robert Parsons, Bp. Babington, Gabriell Harvey, Anthony Munday, Bacon, Shakespeare, Dr. Donne, Ben Jonson, the Rev. Robert Burton, Thomas Randolph, John Wilson, and so on, till past the Restoration.

Extracts lie before me, in which occur *me, us, thee, you, him, her, them*,—*dread, lacketh, liketh, list, loathe, needs, ought, repenteth*, and the like; that is to say, the dative case where we now put the nominative, and the verb in regimen, not, as at present, in agreement. Even Sir Thomas More has "*me needeth* not to bost." Relics of this construction remain in the concretions *methinks, me-thought*, and *meseems*. According to Dr. Johnson, who rightly apprehended *meseems, methinks* is "not easily reconciled to grammar," is "an ungrammatical word," and "is imagined to be a Norman corruption; the French being apt to confound *me* and *I*." Is *methinks*, then, for *I thinks*? While it would have been prudent, in the lexicographer, to let the French alone, it would have called for only a very moderate acquaintance with old English, to introduce him to "*me, him, us, think* or *thinketh*," "*him, her, them, us, thought*," etc., including Sir Thomas More's *me thinking*, or "seeming to me"; *think* having had, of yore, two meanings. Answerable to *methinks* is the German *mich dünkt*.

to *had liefer* and *had rather* passing unheeded, appeared the phrase now established.<sup>66</sup> Much the same is to be said of *had*

*My thinks* and *my thought*, used by the Rev. William Baldwin (1563), and *my thinketh*, besides these, in *New Custome* (1573), are simply bad spellings. *Methoughts*, used by the Rev. William Cartwright, Addison, and others, is a gross error.

Such constructions as *him likes*, etc., we have laid aside; but we have not allowed *it pleases me* to be ousted by the newer *I please*. Certain innovations in the same direction as *I please* and *he likes* have, however, been attempted ineffectually. "*He behoved* to bringe his wif." *Merlin (ut sup.)*, p. 295. And see p. 403. This is still Scotch. "I . . . wyl nought dishonoure the honeste of wymmen with so fowle a name as *she semyd* worthy." Lydgate (?), *The Booke*, etc. (1413, *ut sup.*), p. 63. "Yf ye seme hit be over-longe or ye have ansuere," etc. Bp. Bekynton (1442), in *Official Correspondence*, etc. (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 184. The Bishop's *it is seemed* and *it shall be seemed* may just be noted here. "For a lady soo ledde the where *thow semyd* thy broder was slayne." Sir Thomas Malory (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 273.

By this time it must be patent, in good part, if not altogether, why "*us were better* go" was displaced by "*we were better* go." I express myself thus, because, possibly, the supersession of the former by the latter was owing, in some measure, to the fact that *better* implies, besides the conferring of advantage, the receiving of it. An old translator has: "For they wold not byleven hit. Soo sholde they never be the *better*, though that it were told them." Lydgate (?), *The Booke*, etc. (1413, *ut sup.*), p. 72. And Tyndale writes: "If I be *good* for the offering of a dove, and *better* for a sheep, and yet *better* for an ox, and, soever the better thing I offer, the *better* I am, oh, how accepted should I be, if I offered a man, and, namely, him that I most loved!" *An Answer*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 66.

Landor, personating Isaac Barrow, discourses as follows: "Among the few crudities and barbarisms that yet oppressed our language, in his learned age, Bacon has this: 'A man *were better* rise in his suit.' Indeed, he uses *were better* more than once, with the simple verb after it, and without *to*." *Works and Life (ut sup.)*, vol. IV, p. 381.

Just as we still say *deserving his attention* or *deserving of his attention*, Dr. Johnson, and sundry of his contemporaries, as Goldsmith and Sir Joshua Reynolds, occasionally omitted *of* after *worthy* and *unworthy*; and, so long as the omission was held to be optional, they committed no barbarism. On similar grounds, neither did Bacon commit one, in slighting *to* after *were better*. The elegant Sir Thomas Wilson (1560) did not hesitate to write even: "If others never gette more by bookes then I have doen, *it wer better* be a carter then a scholar, for worldlie profite." *The Arte of Rhetorike* (ed. 1567), sig. A 5 r.

A Landorian attempt at a genetic explication of *were better rise* would, doubtless, have been a curiosity.

<sup>66</sup> None but very finical stylists scruple, now-a-days, at *had better*. Lord Macaulay has it once in his *History*, and five times elsewhere. *Had rather*, however it may be in conversation, has gradually been falling into disfavour, with the best authors, during the last eighty years. Lord Macaulay uses it only three times.

*best*, towards deducing its origin, as has been said of *had better*.<sup>67</sup>

In the pages of Jane Austen, Lord Byron, "George Eliot," Mr. Matthew Arnold, Mr. Leslie Stephen, and Mr. W. H. Mallock, I find *had better* twenty-nine times; *had rather*, only twice. But in Cowper, of the last century, while there are four instances of the former, there are seven of the latter.

Of the three old quotations for *had better* which immediately follow, the first may belong to the days when the expression was still a novelty.

"They *had better have fet* me an errande at Rome." Anon., *Thersytes* (1537).

"Who livethe in cowntes muste marke what they saie; Who livethe for ease *had better live* awaie." Sir John Harington (1594), in *Nugae Antiquae*, vol. I, p. 168 (ed. 1804).

"The Israelites *had better have wanted* their quailles, then to have eaten them with such sauce." Bp. Joseph Hall (1605), *Works* (ed. 1648), p. 45.

It is from no want of material, from the days of Queen Elizabeth onward, that I do not add to these quotations by hundreds.

"*Better he had to have be away*" occurs in *Torrent of Portugal*, l. 1186. The manuscript, avowedly a very careless one, from which this poem is printed, is referred, by its editor, Mr. Halliwell, to the fifteenth century. I am rather sceptical that *had better* dates back so far.

<sup>67</sup> Quotations for *had best* and its forerunners may be despatched summarily.

"Yete *me is best take* mi chaunce." Anon., *Layle Freine* (14th century?), l. 107.

"And in the meane while he cast What thing *him were best to do*." Gower, *Conf. Amant.*, vol. II, p. 306. And see vol. III, p. 38.

"He wyste not what *he was beste to do*." Anon., *Cronycle*, etc. (1483, *ut sup.*), sig. Q 6 v.

"She, . . . doutfull, in her mynde, what *she were best to do*," etc. Bp. Fisher (1509), *English Works* (*ut sup.*), p. 292.

"*Ye are best to retourne* into Fraunce"; "*Ye were beste so to do*." Lord Berners, *Froissart* (*ut sup.*), vol. II, pp. 723, 725.

"*Ye were best . . . to revive* againe." Rev. Nicholas Udall, *Roister Doister* (*ut sup.*), Act III, Scene III.

"*Ye were best to keep* still"; "I think *he were best to be* a little colder in his zeal." Abp. Parker (1565, 1574), in *Correspondence*, etc. (*ut sup.*), pp. 238, 459.

Add Thomas Ingelend (about 1550?), Bp. James Brooks (1555), Dr. Robert Recorde (1556), Rev. Dr. Meredith Hanmer (1581), Rev. Dr. William Fulke (1583), Rev. Richard Bernard (1598), Anthony Munday, Rev. Robert Greene, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and a host of unnamed authors, the latest of them writing after 1660. More than half of them have *were best to*. *He was best to* is seen in Richard Johnson's *Tom a Lincolne* (1635), p. 30 (ed. 1828); and in the anonymous *Ariana* (1636), p. 102.

"You *had best omit* the worke." Dr. William Cuningham, *The Cosmographical Glasse* (1559), p. 61.

"Thou *hadst best to prove* me, whether I can reede." Anon., *New Cusume* (1573), Act I, Scene I.

"I *had best go back*"; "You *had best to use* your sword better, lest I beswinge you." Rev. Robert Greene, *Dramatic Works* (ed. Rev. A. Dyce), vol. I, pp. 37, 51.

Comparable with *had as lief*, as concerns form, if not as having had an analogous ancestor,<sup>68</sup> and with *had better*, in respect that it involves an abusive employment of *had*, is the phrase *had as good*. "*Us were as good go*"<sup>69</sup> was succeeded by "*we were as good go*";<sup>70</sup> and that, by "*we had as good go*."<sup>71</sup>

"And you *had best say*," etc.; "You *had best go* dreame againe." Anon., *First Part of the Contention*, etc. (1594), in *First Sketches*, etc. (1843), pp. 40, 68.

A large number of other authorities being omitted, I pass to De Foe: "I could not well tell what I *had best to do*." *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), vol. I, pp. 36, 37 (ed. 1840).

*Had best*, followed by *to*, is still current among the vulgar. Without this addition, it has all along, from William III's time to this day, been common in writings of a familiar style, and is also to be met with, here and there, in books of a graver cast. For instance, "*had best be settled*" occurs in Mr. Bernard Cracroft's thoughtful *Essays* (1868), vol. I, p. 85; and "I *had best* not *give* her any," in Mr. W. H. Mallock's *New Republic*, p. 145 (ed. 1878).

<sup>68</sup>"*Us were as lief go*," or the like, though a style of expression which all but certainly once existed, I have not yet come upon, whereas I have come upon an expression akin to "*us were as good go*," as will be seen presently.

<sup>69</sup>"*Me had been as good to goo* To the brynnyng fyre of hell." Anon., *Thomas and the Fairy-queen*, in Mr. Halliwell's *Illustrations*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 66.

<sup>70</sup>"*A man were as good to be dede* As smell therof the stynk." Anon. (*temp.* Hen. VI?), in *Reliquiae Antiquae*, vol. I, p. 3.

"*One were*, in a maner, as *good be slayne*." Anon. (15th century?), in *Uttersen's Select Pieces*, etc. (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 36.

"*A man had ben as good to have be smytten* with thonder." Anon., *Lyfe of Roberte the Devyll*, in Mr. W. C. Hazlitt's *Remains*, etc., vol I, p. 233.

If, as is quite possible, these three extracts have datives in connexion with *were* and *had been*, they belong to the note immediately preceding this.

"*We were as good to go* towards Flaunders as to Boloyne." Lord Berners, *Froissart* (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 754.

"*A man were as good*, in a maner, *to come in to the paynys of hell*," etc. Henry Brinklow, *Complaynt*, etc. (about 1542), p. 24 (ed. 1874).

"Then *I were as good to saye* nothinge." Ralph Robinson, Translation of *Utopia* (1556), p. 66 (Mr. Arber's edition).

"*You were as good speake* to one that is dead." Rev. Richard Bernard, *Terence*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 453.

"*He were as good be hanged* as once deny her." Henry Porter, *Pleasant Historie*, etc. (1599), p. 38 (ed. 1841).

"*I were as good save* five or six pound, as not, uncle." Ben Jonson, *Every Man out of his Humour* (1599), Act II, Scene I.

"The poore seculars *were as good to be* all *hanged up* togetherward, as live," etc. Rev. William Watson, *A Decacordon of Ten Quodlibeticall Questions*, etc. (ed. 1602), p. 174.

"*He were as good go* a mile on his errand." Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*, Act III, Scene II. See also *Troilus and Cressida*, Act II, Scene I; *Titus Andronicus*, Act IV, Scene III.

Those who, in these later days, use *had rather* and *had as lief*, doubtless imagine that *rather* and *lief* are there adverbs. Their sense of grammatical propriety being, hence, doubly offended by *had as good*, because of its adjective, an attempt at reducing error has been made in the substitute *had as well*. This, though it now and then creeps into books,<sup>72</sup> is, however, well nigh wholly restricted to conversational currency, as are the very much commoner *had sooner* and *had as soon*.

Of the existence of "*us was like to go*" there is, to the best of my information, only a possibility. But there is certitude, dating from a long way back, as regards "*we were like to go*,"<sup>73</sup> the antecedent of "*we had like to have gone*," a corruption which, it may be,

"*Were not Christ as good have a troubled Church as none at all?*" Anthony Wotton, *An Answer to a Popish Pamphlet*, etc. (1605), p. 59.

"If the Jesuits should prevaile, the poore seculars *were as good to be hanged up together*," etc. Rev. Dr. Thomas James, *The Jesuits Downefall Threatned*, etc. (1612), p. 24.

"*I were as good lie under*," etc. Dr. Donne, *Works* (ed. 1839), vol. I, p. 200.

"*I thinke I had as good Goe with you, as tarrie heere to be hangde*." Anon., *The True Tragedie*, etc. (1595), in *First Sketches*, etc. (1843), p. 169.

And so Dr. South, Bp. Jeremy Taylor, Feltham, Sir Roger L'Estrange, John Wilson, the Rev. Jeremy Collier, Archdeacon Echard, Sir Richard Steele, Garrick, Goldsmith, Lord Chesterfield, etc., etc. Steele puts *to* after *had as good*.

The following quotation is made, lest it may mislead others, as it might have misled me: "The Pope is labouring it, I know; but *he has as good keep* his breath to cool his porridge." Sir Roger L'Estrange, etc., *Twenty-two Select Colloquies*, etc., p. 287 (ed. 1725). Turning to the edition of 1689, published in Sir Roger's life-time, I find, at p. 271, *had as good*.

Dr. Johnson says: "*Good*, placed after *had*, with *as*, seems a substantive. But the expression is, I think, vicious; and *good* is, rather, an adjective, elliptically used; or it may be considered as adverbial."

There would have been no occasion for anything of this incertitude, if Dr. Johnson had searched English literature as it was his duty to search it.

<sup>72</sup> You must give way; and you *had as well do so* voluntarily, and with a good grace." Rev. Dr. J. B. Mozley (1844), *Essays Historical and Theological* (1878), vol. II, p. 27.

<sup>73</sup> "Hercules . . . *was like to have* be kyng." Lydgate, *Tragedies*, etc. (*ut sup.*), fol. 109 v.

"Now brik . . . *forto chyne* [*i. e.*, crack] *is like*." Anon., *Palladius on Husbandrie* (about 1420?), p. 156 (1873).

"He *is like*, as y conceive, *to have* the grete rule yn this mater." John Shillingford (1447, *ut sup.*), p. 7. And at pp. 9, 10, 11, 16, 38, etc.

"We *are like to be wery*," etc. *Ludus Coventriae* (*ut sup.*), p. 124. Also at p. 136.

was not developed before the days of Queen Elizabeth.<sup>74</sup> *Had likely* followed by an infinitive is canvassed in a foot-note.<sup>75</sup>

Different from any of the expressions examined in the preceding pages is *had like*,<sup>76</sup> *hadst like*, inasmuch as, here, *had* or *hadst* clearly

<sup>74</sup> "His horse leapt, and fell on his knees, and *hadde lyke to have cast hym* over his necke." William Barkar, *The Bookes of Xenophon*, etc. (1567), sig. C 7 r.

"I *had like to have made* all." Rev. Richard Bernard, *Terence*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 439.

"We *had like to have had* our two noses snapped off." Shakespeare, *Much Ado about Nothing*, Act V, Scene I.

"He *had like to have dyed* presently after." Anon., *The Wonderfull Yeare* (1603), in J. Morgan's *Phoenix Britannicus* (1732), vol. I, p. 47.

"A raging rabble . . . *had like to have left* but small parcels of them untouched and whole." Philemon Holland, *Ammianus Marcellinus* (1609), p. 409.

"As a theefe, when he is pardoned, lookes backe to the gallowes, or to the halter that *had like to hangd* him, so lookes shee on her son." Rev. Dr. Robert Wilkinson, *A Paire of Sermons*, etc. (1614), p. 11. Here we have the past-participial infinitive, long so common.

Dr. Johnson cites Sir Walter Raleigh for *had like*; and I have quotations for it, which may be spared, from Pepys, Dr. Henry More, Sir Roger L'Estrange, Sir T. P. Blount, Hickes, Collier, De Foe, Roger North, Leonard Welsted, Swift, Dr. Sheridan, Richardson, Goldsmith, Cowper, and Mr. Ruskin.

<sup>75</sup> John Flamank wrote, about 1503: "I hade no wittnes then but my sylfe; but, as hyt hapned afterwarde, I caused hym, by good crafte, to confesse the same he had said to me be fore hym that was marshell here at that tyme; and, els, I *hade lykly to be putt* to a grett plonge for my trothe." *Letters, etc., of Richard III and Henry VII* (1861, 1863), vol. I, p. 235.

If explicable with reference to *had liefer*, "I *hade lykly*," etc., is to be construed: "I should consider as likely my being put," etc. But we here have to do with a sentence belonging to an age when ordinary writers of English dashed down very recklessly what they had to communicate; and Flamank's phrase, in order to warrant any stable philological conclusion, would have to be matched by others.

Henry, Earl of Monmouth, also uses *had likely*. "A very hot skirmish *had likely to have been*, had not the King," etc. *Compleat History of the Warrs of Flanders* (1654), pp. 274, 275.

*Had likely* here signifies "was likely." What follows it was to be expected.

<sup>76</sup> Ignorance has connected the *like* of *had like* with the verb *like*, and has engendered the vulgarism *had liked*, in its stead.

"I *had liked to have begged* a parrot for my wife." Pepys (1662), *Diary*, etc. (*ut sup.*), vol. II, p. 31.

"The rabble *had lik'd to have pulled* him to pieces." Mrs. Aphra Behn (died 1689), *Novels* (ed. 1871), vol. I, p. 282.

"I had formerly the very same [memorial] from himself; and so had the judges, whom he *had liked to have provoked* by his clownish behaviour at the bar." Abp. William Nicolson (1716), in Sir Henry Ellis's *Original Letters*, etc. (*ut sup.*), First Series, vol. III, p. 396.

stands for *was*, *were*, or *wast*. Nor is this all. On looking narrowly at the entire phrase "we had like to have gone,"<sup>77</sup> who can avoid seeing, in it, a mere monstrosity? To its lawlessness touching *had* it joins free play with *like*, which, by virtue of its context, becomes an adverb; and, besides this, it would convey the idea of indefiniteness of time by the infinitive perfect. Since what is intended by it is, "there was a likelihood of our going,"<sup>78</sup> it is, if I am not mistaken, a most portentous device. As if after conference, and in concert, the anomaly which it typifies has been eschewed unanimously by the best writers of our century.

*Need* being, as a neuter verb, one after which, in regimen, *to* may often be forgone, it is not singular that the nominal verb *had need*<sup>79</sup>

"Here I *had liked to have suffered* a second shipwreck." De Foe, *Robinson Crusoe* (*ut sup.*), vol. I, p. 60. See also vol. I, p. 61.

"There is another thing that *had liked to have slipped* out of my memory." Sir C. H. Williams (1741), *Works*, etc. (1822), vol. II, pp. 92, 93.

Only the other day I heard an English gentleman say: "I *had liked to lost* the train." Not a whit more aberrant is the *runned*, for *ran* and *run*, of my humbler neighbours in Suffolk.

<sup>77</sup> Not of so frequent occurrence, and slightly less objectionable, is "we had like to go."

<sup>78</sup> The notion seems to me utterly unsustainable, that the expression first meant "we should look on going as likely." At all events, I have chanced on nothing that makes for it in the least.

<sup>79</sup> Here there is an idiomatic ellipsis of *a*, precisely as there is in *make mention*, *give ear*, etc., etc.

Landor, in one of his Imaginary Conversations, makes Sir Isaac Newton impeach *had need have* in a sentence from Lord Bacon: "He that is only real *had need have* exceeding great parts of virtue." Dr. Isaac Barrow is feigned to reply: "The true words, which all authors write amiss, are '*ha*' need *of*.' *Ha*' need sounds like *had need*, and *have* sounds like *of*, in speaking quickly. Hence the wisest men have written the words improperly, by writing at once from the ear, without an appeal or reference to grammar." *Works and Life* (*ut sup.*), vol. IV, p. 382.

This is very shallow criticism. As *had need be* must always have been quite as common as *had need have*, if not more so, how would Landor account for its *be*? Again, for several generations after *had need* arose, the verb which it governed was generally introduced by *to*. These considerations cannot have occurred to Landor, who, moreover, nowhere gives token that he had read older English to any mentionable extent, or with any approach to close study. For the rest, it is not irrelevant to note, that, among the predecessors of Bacon who were separated from him by a shorter interval than that between Addison and ourselves, there were those, as I know from several passages, that wrote "*have need to mercy*," etc., putting to for *of*. See the foot of p. 322, *infra*.

Isaac Barrow, as it must strike any one who has observed his English at all scrutinizingly, was whimsically chosen, by Landor, as an exponent of linguistic



should, in like manner, frequently dispense with the sign of the infinitive, as in "we *had need go*." <sup>80</sup> All that, over and above this, is peculiar about *had need*, consists in its *had*, the vagueness of which, in marking time, is here once more observable.

scrupulosity. *Anthems* for *antheims*, *department* for *departure*, *disingenuity* and *ingenuity* for *disingenuousness* and *ingenuousness*, *overflowen* for *overflowed*, *respective* for *respectful*, *tenent* for *tenet*, *inhability*, a *seraphim*, *monstruous*, *stupendious*, *have underwent*, *beseched*, *blowed*, *catched*, *shaked*, and the verb *critize*, being specimens of what he put forth as English, he would hardly have frowned on *had need have*. Is it, indeed, perfectly certain that he has nowhere used it?

<sup>80</sup> First I will quote passages in which *to* is expressed.

Five such, ranging from 1465 to 1633, are given in note 39, at p. 298, *supra*.

"And ye purpose to bargayn with hym, ye *had need to hye* yow." John Paston (1472), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. III, p. 34. Also *id.*, *ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 133 (1475?), 143 (1472), 220 (1478), 257 (1479).

"Wherefore ye *had nede to warne* Wylliam Gogyne and hys felaws to purvey them of wyne i now," etc. William Paston (1489), *ibid.*, vol. III, p. 352.

"If my lord send for T. Bange, or the woman, some of my lordis servauntes *had need to come* for theym." Sir John Paston (1495), *ibid.*, vol. III, p. 390.

"We *had need to take heed*, everywhere, that we be not beguiled with false allegories, . . . Here a man *had need to put on* all his spectacles, and to arm himself against invisible spirits." Tyndale, *Doctrinal Treatises*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 425.

"If the kings of the earth, when they break that sacrament between them, do say on this wise, . . . then is it a terrible oath; and they *had need to take heed* how they make it, and, if it be lawfully made, not to break it at all." *Id.*, *Expositions*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 301.

"John Baptist said to Christ: 'I *had need to be baptized* of thee; and comest thou to me?' Whereof did John confess that he had need to be washed and purged by Christ?" *Id.*, *An Answer*, etc. (*ut sup.*), pp. 206, 207. Tyndale, in his *New Testament*, has "I *ought to be baptysed*." The authorized version has: "I *have need to be baptized*."

"Who so hath suche bees as your maister in hys head, *Had neede to have* his spirites with musike to be fed." Udall, *Roister Doister*, Act I, Scene IV.

"Liars *had need to have* good memories." Attributed to Bp. Latimer (1556), in Bp. Ridley's *Works* (*ut sup.*), p. 110.

"Alas, they be people rude of their own nature, and the more *had need to be looked to*, for retaining them in quiet and civility." Abp. Parker (1560), *Correspondence* (*ut sup.*), p. 123.

"We *had need to see* more, before we be convicted of corruption." Rev. Dr. William Fulke, *A Defense*, etc. (1583, *ut sup.*), p. 181.

"We see heere a short time limited; and yet wee have a long way to go, even as far as it is from earth to heaven: and *had wee not*, then, *need to pray* to have our life in some measure prolonged?" Rev. Dr. Robert Wilkinson, *A Paire of Sermons*, etc. (1614), pp. 26, 27.

"What though thou art seated in an eminent place, where thou overlookest all! . . . It tells thee thou *hadst need to looke* about thee. What place left for retired thoughts?" Rev. Thomas Ailesbury, *A Sermon*, etc. (1623), p. 45.

Upwards of five and twenty years have passed since I committed to paper the substance of the essay now laid before the public. Wider reading, or more attentive, would, I am convinced, have enabled me to support my arguments by an ampler exhibition of

"And the best *had need to be* carefull to keep themselves awake; or els this sleep will seize upon them." Rev. Daniel Dent, *A Sermon against Drunkennes* (1628), p. 12.

"Our houre runnes apace: wee *had need to worke* hard." Rêv. George Hughes, *The Saints Losse and Lamentation* (1632), pp. 53, 54.

"Seeing, then, that truth consisteth in the right ordering of names in our affirmations, a man that seeketh precise truth *had need to remember* what every name he uses stands for," etc. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 15 (ed. 1651).

"When I have most freedom, I shall most suspect my self. He that is turn'd into the sea *had need to look* to have his pilot along." Feltham, *Resolves*, etc., p. 200 (ed. 1696).

And so I might go on indefinitely. Even in our own age, instances like the foregoing are not unknown.

"The Petersburg telegrapher . . . *had need to be* a strong hand, if he is to be permanently telegraphing to us about places and things between Russia and India" Viscount Strangford (1868), *A Selection*, etc., vol. II, p. 233.

"If the bad-tempered man wants to apologize, he *had need to do it* on a large public scale," etc. "George Eliot," *Impressions of Theophrastus Such*, p. 129 (ed. 1879).

But, from the very first, not improbably, *to* was optionally dropped after *had need*.

"But and it lyke you to take the worchip uppon you, ye *had nede high* you to London, . . . Nevertheless, if ye be dysposed, ye *had nede send* a man by fore, in all hast, that no thing be to seke." Thomas Playter (1461), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. II, pp. 13, 14.

A vast collection of extracts which I have got together brings out the fact, that the phrase in question enjoyed marked acceptance all through the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Divines, historians, and dramatists alike favoured it, both then and afterwards. Sir Th. Wilson, Bp. Aylmer, Dr. Th. Lodge, Shakespeare, Donne, Ben Jonson, Bp. Jos. Hall, Prynne, the Rev. Edmund Calamy, Bp. Taylor, the Rev. Jasper Mayne, Bp. John Gauden, Sir Roger L'Estrange, Archdeacon Echard, Swift, and a hundred other well-known writers, have admitted it to their pages. Cowper has it again and again: so has "George Eliot": and who has not heard it from the best speakers of English? Yet one can learn little or nothing of all this from the makers of our dictionaries and grammars.

Near the beginning of this note, Tyndale is quoted, more than once, for the quasi-aoristic *had heed* followed by an infinitive. What is still more noticeable is his aoristic *had need of*.

"And, after the same manner, though our popish hypocrites succeed Christ and his apostles, and have their scripture, yet they be fallen from the faith and living of them, and are heretics, and *had need of* a John Baptist to convert them." *An Answer*, etc. (*ut sup.*), p. 45.

Similarly, as the context shows, writes the Rev. Dr. William Fulke: "We *had need of* a better demonstration than the former, by which you yourselves are proved heretics, rather than we." *A Defense*, etc. (1583, *ut sup.*), pp. 36, 37.

usage than, under existing circumstances, is practicable. And yet I cannot help believing that the evidentiary quotations which it has been in my power to produce will be acknowledged, by all but unreasonable cavillers, to substantiate the conclusions here referred to the judgment of scholars.

FITZEDWARD HALL.

"A man wronged *had need* of a more noble hart to forgive his enemie, than to be revenged of him and to kill him." T. B., *The French Academie* (1586, *ut sup.*), p. 360. Also at pp. 124, 165.

And so Bp. Joseph Hall (1604): "Worldly pleasures, like physicians, give us over, when once we lie a dying: and yet the death-bed *had* most *need* of comforts." *Works*, p. 21 (ed. 1648).

Likewise, in 1609: "If there be any opinions whose mention confutes them, these are they. None can bee more vaine; none *had* more *need* of solidity." *Ibid.*, p. 397.

The convertibility of *had need* and *have need* is seen from Tyndale's *had need to be baptized*, spoken of above, and the *have need to be baptized* of the received translation of the New Testament. And here are other passages testifying to their former identity of meaning.

"George . . . They have bene up this two daies. *Nicke*. Then they *had* more *need* to go to bed now." Anon., *The First Part of the Contention*, etc. (1594), in *The First Sketches*, etc. (1843), p. 50.

"George . . . They have been up these two days. *John*. They *have* the more *need* to sleep now, then." *Second Part of King Henry VI*, Act IV, Scene II. Just after occurs "so he *had need*," aoristic.

For *had need* to, aoristic, not followed by a verb, see the second quotation in note 65, at p. 313, *supra*, where *thou* precedes it. *Have need*, as ordinarily employed, but with *to* or *unto* and an accusative case, is used by John Paston (1469 and 1472), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. II, p. 343, and vol. III, p. 46; and it occurs in the anonymous *Cronycle of Englonde* (1483, *ut sup.*), sig. P 1 r.

Of such phraseology as *have need be* I am aware of but two instances.

"Ye *have nede* fare fayre with hym; for he ys full daungerouse, when he wille." William Worcestre (1456), in the *Paston Letters*, vol. I, p. 375.

"All men, therefore, . . . *have need be taught* to distinguish well between what is and what is not necessary to eternall salvation." Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 321 (ed. 1651).

In older English, an unwarrantable *th* is often seen, where we write *d* or *dd*; witness *hundreth*, *lather*, *meath*, *murther*, *ruther*. On the other hand, the etymological *d* or *dh* of many words has been changed to *th*; and the medieval *fader*, *further*, *gader*, *hider*, *ledder*, *moder*, *oder*, *tedder*, and *thider* were slow in yielding to the present *father*, *further*, *gather*, *hither*, *leather*, etc. At the time when *th* and *d* were largely interchangeable, *had* was now and then put for *hath*, singular and plural, at least when written. In case this spelling was not from carelessness, but represented actual pronunciation, "he, you, etc., *had need*" was, at first, nothing but a variation of "he, you, etc., *hath need*." On this theory,—one which I set little by,—there is a difficulty about "*I had need*," though *I hath* is not unknown; but it may have been a corruption induced by an aim at uniformity. "*Thou had need*" I have not fallen in with, except in the passage lately referred to.